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THE

# WORKS

OF

# WILLIAM E. CHANNING, D. D.

SEVENTH COMPLETE EDITION,

WITH

AN INTRODUCTION.

VOL. I.

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# CONTENTS OF VOL. I


PAGE

REMARKS ON THE CHARACTER AND WRITINGS OF JOHN MILTON. — (From the CHRISTIAN EXAMINER for 1826.) . . . . . 3

REMARKS ON THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF NAPOLEON BONAPARTE. — (From the CHRISTIAN EXAMINER for 1827-28):

PART I. . . . . 69

PART II. . . . . 137

REMARKS ON THE CHARACTER AND WRITINGS OF FENELON. — (From the CHRISTIAN EXAMINER for 1829.) . . . . . 167

THE MORAL ARGUMENT AGAINST CALVINISM. — (From the CHRISTIAN DISCIPLE for 1820.) . . . . . 217

REMARKS ON NATIONAL LITERATURE. . . . . 243

REMARKS ON ASSOCIATIONS. . . . . 281

THE UNION. — (From the CHRISTIAN EXAMINER for May, 1829.) . . 333

REMARKS ON EDUCATION. — (From the CHRISTIAN EXAMINER for November, 1833.) . . . . . 369

# INTRODUCTORY REMARKS.

THE following tracts, having passed through various editions at home and abroad, are now collected to meet the wishes of those, who may incline to possess them in a durable form. In common with all writings, which have obtained a good degree of notice, they have been criticized freely; but as they have been published not to dictate opinions, but to excite thought and inquiry, they have not failed of their end, even when they have provoked doubt or reply. They have, I think, the merit of being earnest expressions of the writer's mind, and of giving the results of quiet, long-continued thought.

Some topics will be found to recur often, perhaps the reader may think too often; but it is in this way, that a writer manifests his individuality, and he can in no other do justice to his own mind. Men are distinguished from one another, not merely by difference of thoughts, but often more by the different degrees of relief or prominence, which they give to the same thoughts. In nature, what an immense dissimilarity do we observe in organized bodies, which consist of the same parts or elements, but in which these are found in great diversity of proportions! So, to learn what a man is, it is not enough to dissect his mind, and see separately the thoughts and feelings which successively possess him. The question is, what thoughts

and feelings predominate, stand out most distinctly, and give a hue and impulse to the common actions of his mind? What are his great ideas? These form the man, and by their truth and dignity he is very much to be judged.

The following writings will be found to be distinguished by nothing more, than by the high estimate which they express of human nature. A respect for the human soul breathes through them. The time may come for unfolding my views more fully on this and many connected topics. As yet, I have given but fragments; and, on this account, I have been sometimes misapprehended. The truth is, that a man, who looks through the present disguises and humbling circumstances of human nature, and speaks with earnestness of what it was made for and what it may become, is commonly set down by men of the world as a romancer, and what is far worse, by the religious, as a minister to human pride, perhaps as exalting man against God. A few remarks on this point seem, therefore, a proper introduction to these volumes.

It is not, however, my purpose in this place to enter far into the consideration of the greatness of human nature, and of its signs and expressions in the inward and outward experience of men. It will be sufficient here to observe, that the greatness of the soul is especially seen in the intellectual energy which discerns absolute, universal truth, in the idea of God, in freedom of will and moral power, in disinterestedness and self-sacrifice, in the boundlessness of love, in aspirations after perfection, in desires and affections, which time and space cannot confine, and the world cannot fill. The soul, viewed in these lights, should fill us with awe. It is an immortal germ, which may be said to contain now within itself what endless ages are to unfold. It is truly an image of the infinity of God, and no words can do justice to its grandeur.

There is, however, another and very different aspect of our nature. When we look merely at what it now is, at its present developement, at what falls under present consciousness, we see in it much of weakness and limitation, and still more, we see it narrowed and degraded by error and sin. This is the aspect, under which it appears to most men; and so strong is the common feeling of human infirmity, that a writer, holding higher views, must state them with caution, if he would be listened to without prejudice. My language, I trust, will be sufficiently measured, as my object at present is not to set forth the greatness of human nature, but to remove difficulties in relation to it, in the minds of religious people.

From the direction, which theology has taken, it has been thought, that to ascribe any thing to man, was to detract so much from God. The disposition has been, to establish striking contrasts between man and God, and not to see and rejoice in the likeness between them. It has been thought, that to darken the creation, was the way to bring out more clearly the splendor of the Creator. The human being has been subjected to a stern criticism. It has been forgotten, that he is as yet an infant, new to existence, unconscious of his powers; and he has been expected to see clearly, walk firmly, and act perfectly. Especially in estimating his transgressions, the chief regard has been had, not to his finite nature and present stage of developement, but to the infinity of the being against whom he has sinned; so that God's greatness, instead of being made a ground of hope, has been used to plunge man into despair.

I have here touched on a great spring of error in religion, and of error among the most devout. I refer to the tendency of fervent minds, to fix their thoughts exclusively or unduly on God's infinity. It is said, in devotional writings, that exalted and absorbing views of

God enter into the very essence of piety; that our grand labor should be, to turn the mind from the creature to the creator; that the creature cannot sink too low in our estimation, or God fill too high a sphere. God, we are told, must not be limited; nor are his rights to be restrained by any rights in his creatures. These are made to minister to their Maker's glory, not to glorify themselves. They wholly depend on him, and have no power which they can call their own. His sovereignty, awful and omnipotent, is not to be kept in check, or turned from its purposes, by any claims of his subjects. Man's place is the dust. The entire prostration of his faculties is the true homage, he is to offer God. He is not to exalt his reason or his sense of right against the decrees of the Almighty. He has but one lesson to learn, that he is nothing, that God is All in All. Such is the common language of theology.

These views are exceedingly natural. That the steady, earnest contemplation of the Infinite One, should so dazzle the mind as to obscure or annihilate all things else, ought not to surprise us. By looking at the sun, we lose the power of seeing other objects. It was, I conceive, one design of God in hiding himself so far from us, in throwing around himself the veil of his works, to prevent this very evil. He intended that our faculties should be left at liberty to act on other things besides himself, that the will should not be crushed by his overpowering greatness, that we should be free agents, that we should recognise rights in ourselves and in others as well as in the Creator, and thus be introduced into a wide and ever enlarging sphere of action and duty. Still the idea of the Infinite is of vast power, and the mind, in surrendering itself to it, is in danger of becoming unjust to itself and other beings, of losing that sentiment of self-respect, which should be inseparable from a moral nature, of de

grading the intellect by the forced belief of contradictions which God is supposed to sanction, and of losing that distinct consciousness of moral freedom, of power over itself, without which the interest of life and the sense of duty are gone.

Let it not be imagined from these remarks, that I would turn the mind from God's Infinity. This is the grand truth; but it must not stand alone in the mind. The finite is something real as well as the infinite. We must reconcile the two in our theology. It is as dangerous to exclude the former as the latter. God surpasses all human thought; yet human thought, mysterious, unbounded, "wandering through eternity," is not to be contemned. God's sovereignty is limitless; still man has rights. God's power is irresistible; still man is free. On God, we entirely depend; yet we can and do act from ourselves, and determine our own characters. These antagonist ideas, if so they may be called, are equally true, and neither can be spared. It will not do for an impassioned or an abject piety, to wink one class of them out of sight. In a healthy mind they live together; and the worst error in religion has arisen from throwing a part of them into obscurity.

In most religious systems, the tendency has been to seize exclusively on the idea of the Infinite, and to sacrifice to this the finite, the created, the human. This I have said is very natural. To the eye of sense, man is such a mote in the creation, his imperfections and sins are so prominent in his history, the changes of his life are so sudden, so awful, he vanishes into such darkness, the mystery of the tomb is so fearful, all his outward possessions are so fleeting, the earth which he treads on so insecure, and all surrounding nature subject to such fearful revolutions, that the reflective and sensitive mind is prone to see Nothingness inscribed on the human be-

ing and on all things that are made, and to rise to God as the only reality. Another more influential feeling contributes to the same end. The mind of man, in its present infancy and blindness, is apt to grow servile through fear, and seeks to propitiate the Divine Being by flattery and self-depreciation. Thus deep are the springs of religious error. To admit all the elements of truth into our system, at once to adore the infinity of God and to give due importance to our own free moral nature, is no very easy work. But it must be done. Man's free activity is as important to religion as God's infinity. In the kingdom of Heaven, the moral power of the subject is as essential as the omnipotence of the sovereign. The rights of both have the same sacredness. To rob man of his dignity is as truly to subvert religion, as to strip God of his perfection. We must believe in man's agency as truly as in the Divine, in his freedom as truly as in his dependence, in his individual being as truly as in the great doctrine of his living in God. Just as far as the desire of exalting the Divinity obscures these conceptions, our religion is sublimated into mysticism or degraded into servility.

In the Oriental world, the human mind has tended strongly to fix on the idea of the Infinite, the Vast, the Incomprehensible. In its speculations it has started from God. Swallowed up in his greatness, it has annihilated the creature. Perfection has been thought to lie in self-oblivion, in losing one's self in the Divinity, in establishing exclusive communion with God. The mystic worshipper fled from society to wildernesses, where not even nature's beauty might divert the soul from the Unseen. Living on roots, sleeping on the rocky floor of his cave, he hoped to absorb himself in the One and the Infinite. The more the consciousness of the individual was lost, and the more the will and the intellect

became passive or yielded to the universal soul, the more perfect seemed the piety.

From such views naturally sprung Pantheism. No being was at last recognised but God. He was pronounced the only reality. The universe seemed a succession of shows, shadows, evanescent manifestations of the One, Ineffable Essence. The human spirit was but an emanation, soon to be reabsorbed in its source. God, it was said, bloomed in the flower, breathed in the wind, flowed in the stream, and thought in the human soul. All our powers were but movements of one infinite force. Under the deceptive spectacle of multiplied individuals intent on various ends, there was but one agent. Life, with its endless changes, was but the heaving of one and the same eternal ocean.

This mode of thought naturally gave birth or strength to that submission to despotic power, which has characterized the Eastern world. The sovereign, in whom the whole power of the state was centred, became an emblem of the One, Infinite Power, and was worshipped as its representative. An unresisting quietism naturally grew out of the contemplation of God as the all-absorbing and irresistible energy. Man, a bubble, arising out of the ocean of the universal soul, and fated soon to vanish in it again, had plainly no destiny to accomplish, which could fill him with hope or rouse him to effort. In the East the individual was counted nothing. In Greece and Rome he was counted much, and he did much. In the Greek and the Roman the consciousness of power was indeed too little chastened by religious reverence. Their gods were men. Their philosophy, though in a measure borrowed from or tinctured with the Eastern, still spoke of man as his own master, as having an independent happiness in the energy of his own will. As far as they thus severed themselves from God, they did themselves

great harm; but in their recognition, however imperfect, of the grandeur of the soul, lay the secret of their vast influence on human affairs.

In all ages of the church, the tendency of the religious mind to the exclusive thought of God, to the denial or forgetfulness of all other existence and power, has come forth in various forms. The Catholic church, notwithstanding its boasted unity, has teemed with mystics, who have sought to lose themselves in God. It would seem as if the human mind, cut off by this church from free, healthful inquiry, had sought liberty in this vague contemplation of the Infinite. In the class, just referred to, were found many noble spirits, especially Fenelon, whose quietism, with all its amiableness, we must look on as a disease.

In Protestantism, the same tendency to exalt God and annihilate the creature has manifested itself, though in less pronounced forms. We see it in Quakerism, and Calvinism, the former striving to reduce the soul to silence, to suspend its action, that in its stillness God alone may be heard; and the latter, making God the only power in the universe, and annihilating the free will, that one will alone may be done in heaven and on earth.

Calvinism will complain of being spoken of as an approach to Pantheism. It will say, that it recognises distinct minds from the Divine. But what avails this, if it robs these minds of self-determining force, of original activity; if it makes them passive recipients of the Universal Force; if it sees in human action only the necessary issues of foreign impulse. The doctrine, that God is the only Substance, which is pantheism, differs little from the doctrine, that God is the only active power of the universe. For what is substance without power? It is a striking fact, that the philosophy, which teaches that matter is an inert substance, and that God is the

force which pervades it, has led men to question, whether any such thing as matter exists; whether the powers of attraction and repulsion, which are regarded as the indwelling Deity, be not its whole essence. Take away force, and substance is a shadow and might as well vanish from the universe. Without a free power in man, he is nothing. The divine agent within him is every thing. Man acts only in show. He is a phenomenal existence, under which the one Infinite power is manifested; and is this much better than Pantheism?

One of the greatest of all errors, is the attempt to exalt God, by making him the sole cause, the sole agent in the universe, by denying to the creature freedom of will and moral power, by making man a mere recipient and transmitter of a foreign impulse. This, if followed out consistently, destroys all moral connexion between God and his creatures. In aiming to strengthen the physical, it ruptures the moral bond, which holds them together. To extinguish the free will is to strike the conscience with death, for both have but one and the same life. It destroys responsibility. It puts out the light of the universe; it makes the universe a machine. It freezes the fountain of our moral feelings, of all generous affection and lofty aspirations. Pantheism, if it leave man a free agent, is a comparatively harmless speculation; as we see in the case of Milton. The denial of moral freedom, could it really be believed, would prove the most fatal of errors. If Edwards's work on the will could really answer its end, if it could thoroughly persuade men that they were bound by an irresistible necessity, that their actions were fixed links in the chain of destiny, that there was but one agent, God, in the universe; it would be one of the most pernicious books ever issued from our press. Happily it is a demonstration which no man believes, which the whole consciousness contradicts.

It is a fact worthy of serious thought and full of solemn instruction, that many of the worst errors have grown out of the religious tendencies of the mind. So necessary is it to keep watch over our whole nature, to subject the highest sentiments to the calm, conscientious reason. Men starting from the idea of God, have been so dazzled by it, as to forget or misinterpret the universe. They have come to see in him the only force in creation and in other beings only signs, shadows, echoes of this. Absolute dependence is the only relation to God, which they have left to human beings. Our infinitely nobler relations, those which spring from the power of free obedience to a moral law, their theory dissolves. The moral nature, of which freedom is the foundation and essence, which confers rights and imposes duties, which is the ground of praise and blame, which lies at the foundation of self-respect, of friendship between man and man, of spiritual connexion between man and his maker, which is the spring of holy enthusiasm and heavenly aspiration, which gives to life its interest, to creation its glory, this is annihilated by the mistaken piety, which, to exalt God, to make him All in All, immolates to him the powers of the universe.

This tendency, as we have seen, gave birth in former ages to asceticism, drove some of the noblest men into cloisters or caverns, infected them with the fatal notion, that there was an hostility between their relations to God and their relations to his creatures, and of course persuaded them to make a sacrifice of the latter. To this we owe systems of theology degrading human nature, denying its power and grandeur, breaking it into subjection to the priest through whom alone God is supposed to approach the abject multitude, and placing human virtue in exaggerated humiliations. The idea of God, the grandest of all, and which ought above all to elevate the soul,

has too often depressed it and led good minds very far astray, a consideration singularly fitted to teach us tolerant views of error, and to enjoin caution and sobriety in religious speculation.

I hope, that I shall not be thought wanting in a just tolerance, in the strictures now offered on those systems of theology and philosophy, which make God the only power in the universe and rob man of his dignity. Among the authors of these, may be found some of the greatest and best men. To this class belonged Hartley, whose work on Man carries indeed the taint of materialism and necessity, but still deserves to be reckoned among the richest contributions ever made to the science of mind, whilst it breathes the profoundest piety. Our own Edwards was as eminent for religious as for intellectual power. The consistency of great error with great virtue is one of the lessons of universal history. But error is not made harmless by such associations. The false theories of which I have spoken, though not thoroughly believed, have wrought much evil. They have done much, I think, to perpetuate those abject views of human nature, which keep it where it is, which check men's aspirations, and reconcile them to their present poor modes of thought and action as the fixed unalterable laws of their being.

Many religious people fall into the error, which I have wished to expose, through the belief that they thus glorify the creator. "The glory of God," they say, "is our chief end;" and this is accomplished as they suppose by taking all power from man and transferring all to his Maker. We have here an example of the injury done by imperfect apprehension and a vague, misty use of Scripture language. The "glory of God," is undoubtedly to be our end; but what does this consist in? It means the shining forth of his perfection in his creation, especially in his spiritual offspring; and it is best pro-

tion, that of rational, moral, free beings to a Spiritual Father. We are not mere material substances, subjected to an irresistible physical law, or mere animals subjected to resistless instincts; but are souls, on which a moral law is written, in which a divine oracle is heard. Take away the moral relation of the created spirit to the universal spirit, and that of entire dependence would remain as it is now; but no ground, and no capacity of religion would remain; and the splendor of the universe would fade away.

We must start in religion from our own souls. In these is the fountain of all divine truth. An outward revelation is only possible and intelligible, on the ground of conceptions and principles, previously furnished by the soul. Here is our primitive teacher and light. Let us not disparage it. There are, indeed, philosophical schools of the present day, which tell us, that we are to start in all our speculations from the Absolute, the Infinite. But we rise to these conceptions from the contemplation of our own nature; and even if it were not so, of what avail would be the notion of an Absolute, Infinite existence, an Uncaused Unity, if stripped of all those intellectual and moral attributes, which we learn only from our own souls. What but a vague shadow, a sounding name, is the metaphysical Deity, the substance without modes, the being without properties, the naked unity, which performs such a part in some of our philosophical systems. The only God, whom our thoughts can rest on, and our hearts can cling to, and our consciences can recognise, is the God whose image dwells in our own souls. The grand ideas of Power, Reason, Wisdom, Love, Rectitude, Holiness, Blessedness, that is, of all God's attributes, come from within, from the action of our own spiritual nature. Many indeed think that they learn God from marks of design and skill in the outward world; but our ideas of design

and skill, of a determining cause, of an end or purpose, are derived from consciousness, from our own souls. Thus the soul is the spring of our knowledge of God.

These remarks might easily be extended, but these will suffice to show, that in insisting on the claims of our nature to reverence, I have not given myself to a subject of barren speculation. It has intimate connexions with religion ; and deep injury to religion has been the consequence of its neglect. I have also felt and continually insisted, that a new reverence for man was essential to the cause of social reform. As long as men regard one another as they now do, that is as little better than the brutes, they will continue to treat one another brutally. Each will strive, by craft or skill, to make others his tools. There can be no spirit of brotherhood, no true peace, any farther than men come to understand their affinity with and relation to God and the infinite purpose for which he gave them life. As yet these ideas are treated as a kind of spiritual romance ; and the teacher, who really expects men to see in themselves and one another the children of God, is smiled at as a visionary. The reception of this plainest truth of Christianity would revolutionize society, and create relations among men not dreamed of at the present day. A union would spring up, compared with which our present friendships would seem estrangements. Men would know the import of the word Brother, as yet nothing but a word to multitudes. None of us can conceive the change of manners, the new courtesy and sweetness, the mutual kindness, deference, and sympathy, the life and energy of efforts for social melioration, which are to spring up, in proportion as man shall penetrate beneath the body to the spirit, and shall learn what the lowest human being is. Then insults, wrongs, and oppressions, now hardly thought of, will give a deeper shock than we receive from crimes, which the

over man. The people have now been robbed of the necessaries of life, and now driven to the field of slaughter like flocks of sheep, to make one man the master of millions. Through this passion, government, ordained by God, to defend the weak against the strong, to exalt right above might, has up to this time been the great wrong doer. Its crimes throw those of private men into the shade. Its murders reduce to insignificance those of the bandits, pirates, highwaymen, assassins, against whom it undertakes to protect society. How harmless at this moment are all the criminals of Europe, compared with the Russian power in Poland. This passion for power, which in a thousand forms, with a thousand weapons, is warring against human liberty, and which Christianity condemns as its worst foe, I have never ceased to reprobate with whatever strength of utterance God has given me. Power trampling on right, whether in the person of king or priest, or in the shape of democracies, majorities and republican slaveholders, is the saddest sight to him who honors human nature and desires its enlargement and happiness.

So fearful is the principle of which I have spoken, that I have thought it right to recommend restrictions on power, and a simplicity in government, beyond what most approve. Power, I apprehend, should not be suffered to run into great masses. No more of it should be confided to rulers, than is absolutely necessary to repress crime and preserve public order. A purer age may warrant larger trusts; but the less of government now the better, if society be kept in peace. There should exist, if possible, no office to madden ambition. There should be no public prize tempting enough to convulse a nation. One of the tremendous evils of the world, is the monstrous accumulation of power in a few hands. Half a dozen men may, at this moment, light the fires of war through

the world, may convulse all civilized nations, sweep earth and sea with armed hosts, spread desolation through the fields and bankruptcy through cities, and make themselves felt by some form of suffering through every household in Christendom. Has not one politician recently caused a large part of Europe to bristle with bayonets? And ought this tremendous power to be lodged in the hands of any human being? Is any man pure enough to be trusted with it? Ought such a prize as this to be held out to ambition? Can we wonder at the shameless profligacy, intrigue, and the base sacrifices of public interests, by which it is sought, and when gained, held fast Undoubtedly great social changes are required to heal this evil, to diminish this accumulation of power. National spirit, which is virtual hostility to all countries but our own, must yield to a growing humanity, to a new knowledge of the spirit of Christ. Another important step is, a better comprehension by communities, that government is at best a rude machinery, which can accomplish but very limited good, and which, when strained to accomplish what individuals should do for themselves, is sure to be perverted by selfishness to narrow purposes, or to defeat through ignorance its own ends. Man is too ignorant to govern much, to form vast plans for states and empires. Human policy has almost always been in conflict with the great laws of social well being; and the less we rely on it the better. The less of power, given to man over man, the better. I speak, of course, of physical, political force. There is a power which cannot be accumulated to excess, I mean moral power, that of truth and virtue, the royalty of wisdom and love, of magnanimity and true religion. This is the guardian of all right. It makes those whom it acts on, free. It is mightiest when most gentle. In the progress of society this

is more and more to supersede the coarse workings of government. Force is to fall before it.

It must not be inferred from these remarks, that I am an enemy to all restraint. Restraint in some form or other, is an essential law of our nature, a necessary discipline, running through life, and not to be escaped by any art or violence. Where can we go, and not meet it? The powers of nature are, all of them, limits to human power. A never-ceasing force of gravity chains us to the earth. Mountains, rocks, precipices, and seas forbid our advances. If we come to society, restraints multiply on us. Our neighbour's rights limit our own. His property is forbidden ground. Usage restricts our free action, fixes our manners, and the language we must speak, and the modes of pursuing our ends. Business is a restraint, setting us wearisome tasks, and driving us through the same mechanical routine day after day. Duty is a restraint, imposing curbs on passion, enjoining one course and forbidding another, with stern voice, with uncompromising authority. Study is a restraint, compelling us, if we would learn any thing, to concentrate the forces of thought, and to bridle the caprices of fancy. All law, divine or human, is, as the name imports, restraint. No one feels more than I do, the need of this element of human life. He, who would fly from it, must live in perpetual conflict with nature, society, and himself.

But all this does not prove, that liberty, free action, is not an infinite good, and that we should seek and guard it with sleepless jealousy. For if we look at the various restraints of which I have spoken, we shall see that liberty is the end and purpose of all. Nature's powers around us hem us in, only to rouse a free power within us. It acts that we should react. Burdens press on us, that the soul's elastic force should come forth. Bounds are set, that we should clear them. The weight, which

gravitation fastens to our limbs, incites us to borrow speed from winds and steam, and we fly where we seemed doomed to creep. The sea, which first stopped us, becomes the path to a new hemisphere. The sharp necessities of life, cold, hunger, pain, which chain man to toil, wake up his faculties, and fit him for wider action. Duty restrains the passions, only that the nobler faculties and affections may have freer play, may ascend to God, and embrace all his works. Parents impose restraint, that the child may learn to go alone, may outgrow authority. Government is ordained, that the rights and freedom of each and all may be inviolate. In study thought is confined, that it may penetrate the depths of truth, may seize on the great laws of nature, and take a bolder range. Thus freedom, ever-expanding action, is the end of all just restraint. Restraint, without this end, is a slavish yoke. How often has it broken the young spirit, tamed the heart and the intellect, and made social life a standing pool. We were made for free action. This alone is life, and enters into all that is good and great Virtue is free choice of the right; love, the free embrace of the heart; grace, the free motion of the limbs; genius, the free, bold flight of thought; eloquence, its free and fervent utterance. Let me add, that social order is better preserved by liberty, than by restraint. The latter, unless most wisely and justly employed, frets, exasperates, and provokes secret resistance; and still more, it is rendered needful very much by that unhappy constitution of society, which denies to multitudes the opportunities of free activity. A community, which should open a great variety of spheres to its members, so that all might find free scope for their powers, would need little array of force for restraint. Liberty would prove the best peace-officer. The social order of New England, without a soldier and almost without a police, bears loud witness to this truth. These

views may suffice to explain the frequent recurrence of this topic in the following tracts.

I will advert to one topic more, and do it briefly, that I may not extend these remarks beyond reasonable bounds. I have written once and again on War, a hackneyed subject, as it is called, yet, one would think, too terrible ever to become a commonplace. Is this insanity never to cease? At this moment, whilst I write, two of the freest and most enlightened nations, having one origin, bound together above all others by mutual dependence, by the interweaving of interests, are thought by some to be on the brink of war. False notions of national honor, as false and unholy as those of the duellist, do most toward fanning this fire. Great nations, like great boys, place their honor in resisting insult and in fighting well. One would think, the time had gone by, in which nations needed to rush to arms, to prove that they were not cowards. If there is one truth, which history has taught, it is, that communities in all stages of society, from the most barbarous to the most civilized, have sufficient courage. No people can charge upon its conscience, that it has not shed blood enough in proof of its valor. Almost any man, under the usual stimulants of the camp, can stand fire. The poor wretch, enlisted from a dram-shop and turned into the ranks, soon fights like a "hero." Must France, and England, and America, after so many hard-fought fields, go to war to disprove the charge of wanting spirit? Is it not time, that the point of honor should undergo some change, that some glimpses at least of the true glory of a nation should be caught by rulers and people? "It is the honor of a man to pass over a transgression," and so it is of states. To be wronged is no disgrace. To bear wrong generously, till every means of conciliation is exhausted; to recoil with manly dread

from the slaughter of our fellow-creatures; to put confidence in the justice, which other nations will do to our motives; to have that consciousness of courage, which will make us scorn the reproach of cowardice; to feel that there is something grander than the virtue of savages; to desire peace for the world as well as ourselves, and to shrink from kindling a flame, which may involve the world; these are the principles and feelings, which do honor to a people. Has not the time come, when a nation professing these, may cast itself on the candor of mankind? Must fresh blood flow for ever, to keep clean the escutcheon of a nation's glory? For one, I look on war with a horror, which no words can express. I have long wanted patience to read of battles. Were the world of my mind, no man would fight for glory; for the name of a commander, who has no other claim to respect, seldom passes my lips, and the want of sympathy drives him from my mind. The thought of man, God's immortal child, butchered by his brother; the thought of sea and land stained with human blood by human hands, of women and children buried under the ruins of besieged cities, of the resources of empires and the mighty powers of nature all turned by man's malignity into engines of torture and destruction; this thought gives to earth the semblance of hell. I shudder as among demons. I cannot now, as I once did, talk lightly, thoughtlessly of fighting with this or that nation. That nation is no longer an abstraction to me. It is no longer a vague mass. It spreads out before me into individuals, in a thousand interesting forms and relations. It consists of husbands and wives, parents and children, who love one another as I love my own home. It consists of affectionate women and sweet children. It consists of Christians, united with me to the common Saviour, and in whose spirit I reverence the likeness of his divine virtue. It con-

sists of a vast multitude of laborers at the plough and in the workshop, whose toils I sympathize with, whose burden I should rejoice to lighten, and for whose elevation I have pleaded. It consists of men of science, taste, genius, whose writings have beguiled my solitary hours, and given life to my intellect and best affections. Here is the nation which I am called to fight with, into whose families I must send mourning, whose fall or humiliation I must seek through blood. I cannot do it, without a clear commission from God. I love this nation. Its men and women are my brothers and sisters. I could not, without unutterable pain, thrust a sword into their hearts. If, indeed, my country were invaded by hostile armies, threatening without disguise its rights, liberties, and dearest interests, I should strive to repel them, just as I should repel a criminal, who should enter my house to slay what I hold most dear, and what is intrusted to my care. But I cannot confound with such a case the common instances of war. In general, war is the work of ambitious men, whose principles have gained no strength from the experience of public life, whose policy is colored if not swayed by personal views or party interests, who do not seek peace with a single heart, who, to secure doubtful rights, perplex the foreign relations of the state, spread jealousies at home and abroad, enlist popular passions on the side of strife, commit themselves too far for retreat, and are then forced to leave to the arbitration of the sword, what an impartial umpire could easily have arranged. The question of peace and war, is too often settled for a country by men, in whom a Christian, a lover of his race, can put little or no trust; and at the bidding of such men, is he to steep his hands in human blood? But this insanity is passing away. This savageness cannot endure, however hardened to it men are by long use.

The hope of waking up some from their lethargy has induced me to recur to this topic so often in my writings.

I might name other topics, which occupy a large space in the following tracts, but enough has been said here. I will only add, that I submit these volumes to the public with a deep feeling of their imperfections. Indeed, on such subjects as God, and Christ, and Duty, and Immortality, and Perfection, how faint must all human utterance be! In another life, we shall look back on our present words as we do on the lispings of our childhood. Still these lispings conduct the child to higher speech. Still, amidst our weakness, we may learn something, and make progress, and quicken one another by free communication. We indeed know and teach comparatively little; but the known is not the less true or precious, because there is an infinite unknown. Nor ought our ignorance to discourage us, as if we were left to hopeless skepticism. There are great truths, which every honest heart may be assured of. There is such a thing, as a serene, immovable conviction. Faith is a deep want of the soul. We have faculties for the spiritual, as truly as for the outward world. God, the foundation of all existence, may become to the mind the most real of all beings. We can and do see in virtue an everlasting beauty. The distinctions of right and wrong, the obligations of goodness and justice, the divinity of conscience, the moral connexion of the present and future life, the greatness of the character of Christ, the ultimate triumphs of truth and love, are to multitudes, not probable deductions, but intuitions accompanied with the consciousness of certainty. They shine with the clear, constant brightness of the lights of heaven. The believer feels himself resting on an everlasting foundation. It is to this power of moral or spiritual perception, that the following writings are chiefly ad-

dressed. I have had testimony, that they have not been wholly ineffectual, in leading some minds to a more living and unfaltering persuasion of great moral truths. Without this, I should be little desirous to send them out in this new form. I trust that they will meet some wants. Books which are to pass away, may yet render much service, by their fitness to the intellectual struggles and moral aspirations of the times in which they are written. If in this or in any way I can serve the cause of truth, humanity, and religion, I shall regard my labors, as having earned the best recompence which God bestows on his creatures.

W. E. C.

Boston, *April 18th*, 1841.

P. S. I intended to say, that some of the following tracts savour of the periods, in which they were written, and give opinions which time has disproved. In the article on Napoleon Bonaparte fears are expressed, which have in a good measure passed away. In the same Review, the conqueror of Waterloo is spoken of as having only the merit of a great soldier. No one then believed, that his opponents were soon to acknowledge his eminence in civil as in military affairs. The article is left as it was, from the difficulty of remodelling it, and because it may be useful as a record of past impressions.

# REVIEWS.

# REMARKS

## ON THE CHARACTER AND WRITINGS

OF

# JOHN MILTON.

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A Treatise on Christian Doctrine, compiled from the Holy Scriptures alone. By John Milton. Translated from the Original, by Charles R. Sumner, M. A., Librarian and Historiographer to His Majesty, and Prebendary of Canterbury. From the London Edition. Boston, 1825. 2 vols. 8vo.

The discovery of a work of Milton, unknown to his own times, is an important event in literary history. The consideration, that we of this age are the first readers of this Treatise, naturally heightens our interest in it; for we seem in this way to be brought nearer to the author, and to sustain the same relation which his contemporaries bore to his writings. The work opens with a salutation, which, from any other man, might be chargeable with inflation; but which we feel to be the natural and appropriate expression of the spirit of Milton. Endowed with gifts of the soul, which have been imparted to few of our race, and conscious of having consecrated them through life to God and mankind, he rose without effort or affectation to the

style of an Apostle: — "JOHN MILTON, TO ALL THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST, AND TO ALL WHO PROFESS THE CHRISTIAN FAITH THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, PEACE, AND THE RECOGNITION OF THE TRUTH, AND ETERNAL SALVATION IN GOD THE FATHER, AND IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST." Our ears are the first to hear this benediction, and it seems not so much to be borne to us from a distant age, as to come immediately from the sainted spirit, by which it was indited.

Without meaning to disparage the "Treatise on Christian Doctrine," we may say, that it owes very much of the attention, which it has excited, to the fame of its author. We value it chiefly as showing us the mind of Milton on that subject, which, above all others, presses upon men of thought and sensibility. We want to know in what conclusions such a man rested after a life of extensive and profound research, of magnanimous efforts for freedom and his country, and of communion with the most gifted minds of his own and former times. The book derives its chief interest from its author, and accordingly there seems to be a propriety in introducing our remarks upon it with some notice of the character of Milton. We are not sure that we could have abstained from this subject, even if we had not been able to offer so good an apology for attempting it. The intellectual and moral qualities of a great man are attractions not easily withstood; and we can hardly serve others or ourselves more, than by recalling to him the attention, which is scattered among inferior topics.

In speaking of the *intellectual* qualities of Milton, we may begin with observing, that the very splendor of

his poetic fame has tended to obscure or conceal the extent of his mind, and the variety of its energies and attainments. To many he seems only a poet, when in truth he was a profound scholar, a man of vast compass of thought, imbued thoroughly with all ancient and modern learning, and able to master, to mould, to impregnate with his own intellectual power, his great and various acquisitions. He had not learned the superficial doctrine of a later day, that poetry flourishes most in an uncultivated soil, and that imagination shapes its brightest visions from the mists of a superstitious age; and he had no dread of accumulating knowledge, lest it should oppress and smother his genius. He was conscious of that within him, which could quicken all knowledge, and wield it with ease and might; which could give freshness to old truths and harmony to discordant thoughts; which could bind together, by living ties and mysterious affinities, the most remote discoveries, and rear fabrics of glory and beauty from the rude materials, which other minds had collected. Milton had that universality which marks the highest order of intellect. Though accustomed almost from infancy to drink at the fountains of classical literature, he had nothing of the pedantry and fastidiousness, which disdain all other draughts. His healthy mind delighted in genius, on whatever soil, or in whatever age, it burst forth and poured out its fulness. He understood too well the rights, and dignity, and pride of creative imagination, to lay on it the laws of the Greek or Roman school. Parnassus was not to him the only holy ground of genius. He felt, that poetry was as a universal presence. Great minds were everywhere his kindred. He felt the enchantment of Oriental fiction, surrendered

himself to the strange creations of "Araby the Blest," and delighted still more in the romantic spirit of chivalry, and in the tales of wonder in which it was embodied. Accordingly his poetry reminds us of the ocean, which adds to its own boundlessness contributions from all regions under heaven. Nor was it only in the department of imagination, that his acquisitions were vast. He travelled over the whole field of knowledge, as far as it had then been explored. His various philological attainments were used to put him in possession of the wisdom stored in all countries, where the intellect had been cultivated. The natural philosophy, metaphysics, ethics, history, theology, and political science, of his own and former times, were familiar to him. Never was there a more unconfined mind; and we would cite Milton as a practical example of the benefits of that universal culture of intellect, which forms one distinction of our times, but which some dread as unfriendly to original thought. Let such remember, that mind is in its own nature diffusive. Its object is the universe, which is strictly one, or bound together by infinite connexions and correspondences; and accordingly its natural progress is from one to another field of thought; and wherever original power, creative genius exists, the mind, far from being distracted or oppressed by the variety of its acquisitions, will see more and more common bearings and hidden and beautiful analogies in all the objects of knowledge, will see mutual light shed from truth to truth, and will compel, as with a kingly power, whatever it understands, to yield some tribute of proof, or illustration, or splendor, to whatever topic it would unfold.

Milton's fame rests chiefly on his poetry, and to this

we naturally give our first attention. By those who are accustomed to speak of poetry as light reading, Milton's eminence in this sphere may be considered only as giving him a high rank among the contributors to public amusement. Not so thought Milton. Of all God's gifts of intellect, he esteemed poetical genius the most transcendent. He esteemed it in himself as a kind of inspiration, and wrote his great works with something of the conscious dignity of a prophet. We agree with Milton in his estimate of poetry. It seems to us the divinest of all arts; for it is the breathing or expression of that principle or sentiment, which is deepest and sublimest in human nature; we mean, of that thirst or aspiration, to which no mind is wholly a stranger, for something purer and lovelier, something more powerful, lofty, and thrilling, than ordinary and real life affords. No doctrine is more common among Christians than that of man's immortality; but it is not so generally understood, that the germs or principles of his whole future being are *now* wrapped up in his soul, as the rudiments of the future plant in the seed. As a necessary result of this constitution, the soul, possessed and moved by these mighty though infant energies, is perpetually stretching beyond what is present and visible, struggling against the bounds of its earthly prison-house, and seeking relief and joy in imaginings of unseen and ideal being. This view of our nature, which has never been fully developed, and which goes farther towards explaining the contradictions of human life than all others, carries us to the very foundation and sources of poetry. He who cannot interpret by his own consciousness what we now have said, wants the true key to works of genius. He has not penetrated

those secret recesses of the soul, where poetry is born and nourished, and inhales immortal vigor, and wings herself for her heavenward flight. In an intellectual nature, framed for progress and for higher modes of being, there must be creative energies, powers of original and ever-growing thought; and poetry is the form in which these energies are chiefly manifested. It is the glorious prerogative of this art, that it "makes all things new" for the gratification of a divine instinct. It indeed finds its elements in what it actually sees and experiences, in the worlds of matter and mind; but it combines and blends these into new forms and according to new affinities; breaks down, if we may so say, the distinctions and bounds of nature; imparts to material objects life, and sentiment, and emotion, and invests the mind with the powers and splendors of the outward creation; describes the surrounding universe in the colors which the passions throw over it, and depicts the soul in those modes of repose or agitation, of tenderness or sublime emotion, which manifest its thirst for a more powerful and joyful existence. To a man of a literal and prosaic character, the mind may seem lawless in these workings; but it observes higher laws than it transgresses, the laws of the immortal intellect; it is trying and developing its best faculties; and in the objects which it describes, or in the emotions which it awakens, anticipates those states of progressive power, splendor, beauty, and happiness, for which it was created.

We accordingly believe that poetry, far from injuring society, is one of the great instruments of its refinement and exaltation. It lifts the mind above ordinary life, gives it a respite from depressing cares, and awakens

the consciousness of its affinity with what is pure and noble. In its legitimate and highest efforts, it has the same tendency and aim with Christianity; that is, to spiritualize our nature. True, poetry has been made the instrument of vice, the pander of bad passions; but, when genius thus stoops, it dims its fires, and parts with much of its power; and, even when poetry is enslaved to licentiousness or misanthropy, she cannot wholly forget her true vocation. Strains of pure feeling, touches of tenderness, images of innocent happiness, sympathies with suffering virtue, bursts of scorn or indignation at the hollowness of the world, passages true to our moral nature, often escape in an immoral work, and show us how hard it is for a gifted spirit to divorce itself wholly from what is good. Poetry has a natural alliance with our best affections. It delights in the beauty and sublimity of the outward creation and of the soul. It indeed portrays, with terrible energy, the excesses of the passions; but they are passions which show a mighty nature, which are full of power, which command awe, and excite a deep though shuddering sympathy. Its great tendency and purpose is, to carry the mind beyond and above the beaten, dusty, weary walks of ordinary life; to lift it into a purer element; and to breathe into it more profound and generous emotion. It reveals to us the loveliness of nature, brings back the freshness of early feeling, revives the relish of simple pleasures, keeps unquenched the enthusiasm which warmed the spring-time of our being, refines youthful love, strengthens our interest in human nature by vivid delineations of its tenderest and loftiest feelings, spreads our sympathies over all classes of society, knits us by new ties with universal being, and, through

the brightness of its prophetic visions, helps faith to lay hold on the future life.

We are aware, that it is objected to poetry, that it gives wrong views and excites false expectations of life, peoples the mind with shadows and illusions, and builds up imagination on the ruins of wisdom. That there is a wisdom, against which poetry wars, the wisdom of the senses, which makes physical comfort and gratification the supreme good, and wealth the chief interest of life, we do not deny ; nor do we deem it the least service which poetry renders to mankind, that it redeems them from the thraldom of this earthborn prudence. But, passing over this topic, we would observe, that the complaint against poetry, as abounding in illusion and deception, is in the main groundless. In many poems there is more of truth than in many histories and philosophic theories. The fictions of genius are often the vehicles of the sublimest verities, and its flashes often open new regions of thought, and throw new light on the mysteries of our being. In poetry, when the letter is falsehood, the spirit is often profoundest wisdom. And, if truth thus dwells in the boldest fictions of the poet, much more may it be expected in his delineations of life ; for the present life, which is the first stage of the immortal mind, abounds in the materials of poetry, and it is the high office of the bard to detect this divine element among the grosser labors and pleasures of our earthly being. The present life is not wholly prosaic, precise, tame, and finite. To the gifted eye it abounds in the poetic. The affections which spread beyond ourselves and stretch far into futurity ; the workings of mighty passions, which seem to arm the soul with an almost superhuman energy ; the innocent and irrepres-

sible joy of infancy ; the bloom, and buoyancy, and dazzling hopes of youth ; the throbbings of the heart, when it first wakes to love, and dreams of a happiness too vast for earth ; woman, with her beauty, and grace, and gentleness, and fulness of feeling, and depth of affection, and blushes of purity, and the tones and looks which only a mother's heart can inspire ; — these are all poetical. It is not true, that the poet paints a life which does not exist. He only extracts and concentrates, as it were, life's ethereal essence, arrests and condenses its volatile fragrance, brings together its scattered beauties, and prolongs its more refined but evanescent joys. And in this he does well ; for it is good to feel that life is not wholly usurped by cares for subsistence, and physical gratifications, but admits, in measures which may be indefinitely enlarged, sentiments and delights worthy of a higher being. This power of poetry to refine our views of life and happiness, is more and more needed as society advances. It is needed to withstand the encroachments of heartless and artificial manners, which make civilization so tame and uninteresting. It is needed to counteract the tendency of physical science, which, being now sought, not, as formerly, for intellectual gratification, but for multiplying bodily comforts, requires a new developement of imagination, taste, and poetry, to preserve men from sinking into an earthly, material, Epicurean life. — Our remarks in vindication of poetry have extended beyond our original design. They have had a higher aim than to assert the dignity of Milton as a poet, and that is, to endear and recommend this divine art to all who reverence and would cultivate and refine their nature.

In delineating Milton's character as a *poet*, we are saved the necessity of looking far for its distinguishing attributes. His name is almost identified with sublimity. He is in truth the sublimest of men. He rises, not by effort or discipline, but by a native tendency and a godlike instinct, to the contemplation of objects of grandeur and awfulness. He always moves with a conscious energy. There is no subject so vast or terrific, as to repel or intimidate him. The overpowering grandeur of a theme kindles and attracts him. He enters on the description of the infernal regions with a fearless tread, as if he felt within himself a power to erect the prison-house of fallen spirits, to encircle them with flames and horrors worthy of their crimes, to call forth from them shouts which should "tear hell's concave," and to embody in their Chief an Archangel's energies, and a Demon's pride and hate. Even the stupendous conception of Satan seems never to oppress his faculties. This character of power runs through all Milton's works. His descriptions of nature show a free and bold hand. He has no need of the minute, graphic skill, which we prize in Cowper or Crabbe. With a few strong or delicate touches, he impresses, as it were, his own mind on the scenes which he would describe, and kindles the imagination of the gifted reader to clothe them with the same radiant hues under which they appeared to his own.

This attribute of power is universally felt to characterize Milton. His sublimity is in every man's mouth. Is it felt that his poetry breathes a sensibility and tenderness hardly surpassed by its sublimity? We apprehend, that the grandeur of Milton's mind has thrown some shade over his milder beauties; and this it has

done, not only by being more striking and imposing, but by the tendency of vast mental energy to give a certain calmness to the expression of tenderness and deep feeling. A great mind is the master of its own enthusiasm, and does not often break out into those tumults, which pass with many for the signs of profound emotion. Its sensibility, though more intense and enduring, is more self-possessed, and less perturbed, than that of other men, and is therefore less observed and felt, except by those who understand, through their own consciousness, the workings and utterance of genuine feeling. We might quote pages in illustration of the qualities here ascribed to Milton. Turn to "Comus," one of his earliest productions. What sensibility breathes in the descriptions of the benighted Lady's singing, by Comus and the Spirit!

"*Comus.* — Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
And with these raptures moves the vocal air
To testify his hidden residence:
How sweetly did they float, upon the wings
Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night,
At every fall smoothing the raven down
Of darkness till it smiled! I have oft heard
My mother Circe with the Sirens three,
Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades,
Culling their potent herbs, and baleful drugs,
Who, as they sung, would take the prison'd soul
And lap it in Elysium; Scylla wept,
And chid her barking waves into attention,
And fell Charybdis murmur'd soft applause:
Yet they in pleasing slumber lull'd the sense,
And in sweet madness robb'd it of itself;
But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
I never heard till now." *Lines* 244–264.

"*Spirit.*—At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound
Rose like a steam of rich distill'd perfumes,
And stole upon the air, that even Silence
Was took ere she was 'ware, and wish'd she might
Deny her nature, and be never more,
Still to be so displaced. I was all ear,
And took in strains that might create a soul
Under the ribs of death." *Lines 555–563.*

In illustration of Milton's tenderness, we will open almost at a venture.

"Now Morn, her rosy steps in th' eastern clime
Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl,
When Adam waked, so custom'd, for his sleep
Was aery-light, from pure digestion bred,
And temperate vapors bland, which th' only sound
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
Lightly dispersed, and the shrill matin song
Of birds on every bough; so much the more
His wonder was to find unwaken'd Eve
With tresses discomposed, and glowing cheek,
As through unquiet rest: He, on his side
Leaning half-raised, with looks of cordial love
Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld
Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces; then with voice
Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
Her hand soft touching, whisper'd thus: Awake,
My fairest, my espoused, my latest found,
Heaven's last best gift, my ever new delight,
Awake! the morning shines, and the fresh field
Calls us; we lose the prime, to mark how spring
Our tender plants, how blows the citron grove,
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
How nature paints her colors, how the bee
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet."
*Par. Lost, B. V. lines 1–25.*

"So cheer'd he his fair spouse, and she was cheer'd,
But silently a gentle tear let fall
From either eye, and wiped them with her hair;
Two other precious drops that ready stood,

Each in their crystal sluice, he ere they fell
Kiss'd, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse,
And pious awe that fear'd to have offended."
*Par. Lost, B. V. lines* 129 – 135.

From this very imperfect view of the qualities of Milton's poetry, we hasten to his great work, "Paradise Lost," perhaps the noblest monument of human genius. The two first books, by universal consent, stand preëminent in sublimity. Hell and hell's king have a terrible harmony, and dilate into new grandeur and awfulness, the longer we contemplate them. From one element, "solid and liquid fire," the poet has framed a world of horror and suffering, such as imagination had never traversed. But fiercer flames than those which encompass Satan, burn in his own soul. Revenge, exasperated pride, consuming wrath, ambition, though fallen, yet unconquered by the thunders of the Omnipotent, and grasping still at the empire of the universe, — these form a picture more sublime and terrible than hell. Hell yields to the spirit which it imprisons. The intensity of its fires reveals the intenser passions and more vehement will of Satan; and the ruined archangel gathers into himself the sublimity of the scene which surrounds him. This forms the tremendous interest of these wonderful books. We see mind triumphant over the most terrible powers of nature. We see unutterable agony subdued by energy of soul. We have not indeed in Satan those bursts of passion, which rive the soul, as well as shatter the outward frame, of Lear. But we have a depth of passion which only an archangel could manifest. The all-enduring, all-defying pride of Satan, assuming so majestically hell's burning throne, and coveting the diadem which scorches his thunder-blasted

brow, is a creation requiring in its author almost the spiritual energy with which he invests the fallen seraph. Some have doubted whether the moral effect of such delineations of the storms and terrible workings of the soul is good; whether the interest felt in a spirit so transcendently evil as Satan, favors our sympathies with virtue. But our interest fastens, in this and like cases, on what is not evil. We gaze on Satan with an awe not unmixed with mysterious pleasure, as on a miraculous manifestation of the *power of mind*. What chains us, as with a resistless spell, in such a character, is spiritual might made visible by the racking pains which it overpowers. There is something kindling and ennobling in the consciousness, however awakened, of the energy which resides in mind; and many a virtuous man has borrowed new strength from the force, constancy, and dauntless courage of evil agents.

Milton's description of Satan attests in various ways the power of his genius. Critics have often observed, that the great difficulty of his work was, to reconcile the spiritual properties of his supernatural beings with the human modes of existence, which he is obliged to ascribe to them. The difficulty is too great for any genius wholly to overcome, and we must acknowledge that our enthusiasm is in some parts of the poem checked by a feeling of incongruity between the spiritual agent, and his sphere and mode of agency. But we are visited with no such chilling doubts and misgivings in the description of Satan in hell. Imagination has here achieved its highest triumph, in imparting a character of reality and truth to its most daring creations. That world of horrors, though material, is yet so remote from our ordinary nature, that a spiritual being, exiled from

heaven, finds there an appropriate home. There is, too, an indefiniteness in the description of Satan's person, which excites without shocking the imagination, and aids us to reconcile, in our conception of him, a human form with his superhuman attributes. To the production of this effect, much depends on the first impression given by the poet; for this is apt to follow us through the whole work; and here we think Milton eminently successful. The first glimpse of Satan is given us in the following lines, which, whilst too indefinite to provoke, and too sublime to allow, the scrutiny of the reason, fill the imagination of the reader with a form which can hardly be effaced.

"Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate
With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood."
*Par. Lost, B. I. lines* 192 – 196.

"Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames,
Driven backward, slope their pointing spires, and, roll'd
In billows, leave i' the midst a horrid vale."
*Lines* 221 – 224.

We have more which we would gladly say of the delineation of Satan; especially of the glimpses which are now and then given of his deep anguish and despair, and of the touches of better feelings which are skilfully thrown into the dark picture, both suited and designed to blend, with our admiration, dread, and abhorrence, a measure of that sympathy and interest, with which every living, thinking being ought to be regarded, and without which all other feelings tend to sin and pain. But there is another topic which we cannot leave

untouched. From hell we flee to Paradise, a region as lovely as hell is terrible, and which, to those who do not know the universality of true genius, will appear doubly wonderful, when considered as the creation of the same mind, which had painted the infernal world.

Paradise and its inhabitants are in sweet accordance, and together form a scene of tranquil bliss, which calms and soothes, whilst it delights, the imagination. Adam and Eve, just moulded by the hand and quickened by the breath of God, reflect in their countenances and forms, as well as minds, the intelligence, benignity, and happiness of their Author. Their new existence has the freshness and peacefulness of the dewy morning. Their souls, unsated and untainted, find an innocent joy in the youthful creation, which spreads and smiles around them. Their mutual love is deep, for it is the love of young, unworn, unexhausted hearts, which meet in each other the only human objects on whom to pour forth their fulness of affection; and still it is serene, for it is the love of happy beings, who know not suffering even by name, whose innocence excludes not only the tumults but the thought of jealousy and shame, who, "imparadised in one another's arms," scarce dream of futurity, so blessed is their present being. We will not say that we envy our first parents; for we feel that there may be higher happiness than theirs, a happiness won through struggle with inward and outward foes, the happiness of power and moral victory, the happiness of disinterested sacrifices and wide-spread love, the happiness of boundless hope, and of "thoughts which wander through eternity." Still there are times, when the spirit, oppressed with pain, worn with toil, tired of tumult, sick at the sight of guilt, wounded in

its love, baffled in its hope, and trembling in its faith, almost longs for the "wings of a dove, that it might fly away" and take refuge amidst the "shady bowers," the "vernal airs," the "roses without thorns," the quiet, the beauty, the loveliness of Eden. It is the contrast of this deep peace of Paradise with the storms of life, which gives to the fourth and fifth books of this poem a charm so irresistible, that not a few would sooner relinquish the two first books, with all their sublimity, than part with these. It has sometimes been said, that the English language has no good pastoral poetry. We would ask, in what age or country has the pastoral reed breathed such sweet strains as are borne to us on "the odoriferous wings of gentle gales" from Milton's Paradise?

We should not fulfil our duty, were we not to say one word on what has been justly celebrated, the harmony of Milton's versification. His numbers have the prime charm of expressiveness. They vary with, and answer to, the depth, or tenderness, or sublimity of his conceptions, and hold intimate alliance with the soul. Like Michael Angelo, in whose hands the marble was said to be flexible, he bends our language, which foreigners reproach with hardness, into whatever forms the subject demands. All the treasures of sweet and solemn sound are at his command. Words, harsh and discordant in the writings of less gifted men, flow through his poetry in a full stream of harmony. This power over language is not to be ascribed to Milton's musical ear. It belongs to the soul. It is a gift or exercise of genius, which has power to impress itself on whatever it touches, and finds or frames, in sounds, motions, and material forms, correspondences and harmonies with its own fervid thoughts and feelings.

We close our remarks on Milton's poetry with observ ing, that it is characterized by seriousness. Great and various as are its merits, it does not discover all the variety of genius, which we find in Shakspeare, whose imagination revelled equally in regions of mirth, beauty, and terror, now evoking spectres, now sporting with fairies, and now "ascending the highest heaven of invention." Milton was cast on times too solemn and eventful, was called to take part in transactions too perilous, and had too perpetual need of the presence of high thoughts and motives, to indulge himself in light and gay creations, even had his genius been more flexible and sportive. But Milton's poetry, though habitually serious, is always healthful, and bright, and vigorous. It has no gloom. He took no pleasure in drawing dark pictures of life; for he knew by experience, that there is a power in the soul to transmute calamity into an occasion and nutriment of moral power and triumphant virtue. We find nowhere in his writings that whining sensibility and exaggeration of morbid feeling, which makes so much of modern poetry effeminating. If he is not gay, he is not spirit-broken. His "L' Allegro" proves, that he understood thoroughly the bright and joyous aspects of nature; and in his "Penseroso," where he was tempted to accumulate images of gloom, we learn, that the saddest views which he took of creation, are such as inspire only pensive musing or lofty contemplation.

From Milton's poetry, we turn to his *prose*. We rejoice that the dust is beginning to be wiped from his prose writings, and that the public are now learning, what the initiated have long known, that these

contain passages hardly inferior to his best poetry, and that they are throughout marked with the same vigorous mind which gave us "Paradise Lost." The attention to these works has been discouraged by some objections, on which we shall bestow a few remarks.

And first, it is objected to his prose writings, that the style is difficult and obscure, abounding in involutions, transpositions, and Latinisms; that his protracted sentences exhaust and weary the mind, and too often yield it no better recompense than confused and indistinct perceptions. We mean not to deny that these charges have some grounds; but they seem to us much exaggerated; and, when we consider that the difficulties of Milton's style have almost sealed up his prose writings, we cannot but lament the fastidiousness and effeminacy of modern readers. We know that simplicity and perspicuity are important qualities of style; but there are vastly nobler and more important ones, such as energy and richness, and in these Milton is not surpassed. The best style is not that which puts the reader most easily and in the shortest time in possession of a writer's naked thoughts; but that which is the truest image of a great intellect, which conveys fully and carries farthest into other souls the conceptions and feelings of a profound and lofty spirit. To be universally intelligible is not the highest merit. A great mind cannot, without injurious constraint, shrink itself to the grasp of common passive readers. Its natural movement is free, bold, and majestic, and it ought not to be required to part with these attributes, that the multitude may keep pace with it. A full mind will naturally overflow in long sentences, and, in the moment of inspiration, when thick-coming thoughts and images crowd

upon it, will often pour them forth in a splendid confusion, dazzling to common readers, but kindling to congenial spirits. There are writings which are clear through their shallowness. We must not expect in the ocean the transparency of the calm inland stream. For ourselves, we love what is called easy reading perhaps too well, especially in our hours of relaxation; but we love, too, to have our faculties tasked by master spirits. We delight in long sentences, in which a great truth, instead of being broken up into numerous periods, is spread out in its full proportions, is irradiated with variety of illustration and imagery, is set forth in a splendid affluence of language, and flows, like a full stream, with a majestic harmony which fills at once the ear and the soul. Such sentences are worthy and noble manifestations of a great and far-looking mind, which grasps at once vast fields of thought, just as the natural eye takes in at a moment wide prospects of grandeur and beauty. We would not indeed have all compositions of this character. Let abundant provision be made for the common intellect. Let such writers as Addison, an honored name, "bring down philosophy from heaven to earth." But let inspired genius fulfil its higher function of lifting the prepared mind from earth to heaven. Impose upon it no strict laws, for it is its own best law. Let it speak in its own language, in tones which suit its own ear. Let it not lay aside its natural port, or dwarf itself that it may be comprehended by the surrounding multitude. If not understood and relished now, let it place a generous confidence in other ages, and utter oracles which futurity will expound. We are led to these remarks, not merely for Milton's justification, but because our times seem

to demand them. Literature, we fear, is becoming too popular. The whole community is now turned into readers, and in this we heartily rejoice; and we rejoice too that so much talent is employed in making knowledge accessible to all. We hail the general diffusion of intelligence as the brightest feature of the present age. But good and evil are never disjoined; and one bad consequence of the multitude of readers is, that men of genius are too anxious to please the multitude, and prefer a present shout of popularity to that less tumultuous, but deeper, more thrilling note of the trump of Fame, which resounds and grows clearer and louder through all future ages.

We now come to a much more serious objection to Milton's prose writings, and that is, that they are disfigured by party spirit, coarse invective, and controversial asperity; and here we are prepared to say, that there are passages in these works which every admirer of his character must earnestly desire to expunge. Milton's alleged virulence was manifested toward private and public foes. The first, such as Salmasius and Morus, deserved no mercy. They poured out on his spotless character torrents of calumny, charging him with the blackest vices of the heart and the foulest enormities of the life. It ought to be added, that the manners and spirit of Milton's age justified a retaliation on such offenders, which the more courteous, and, we will hope, more Christian spirit of the present times will not tolerate. Still we mean not to be his apologists. Milton, raised as he was above his age, and fortified with the consciousness of high virtue, ought to have been, both to his own and future times, an example of Christian equanimity. In regard to the public enemies whom

he assailed, we mean the despots in church and state, and the corrupt institutions which had stirred up a civil war, the general strain of his writings, though strong and stern, must exalt him, notwithstanding his occasional violence, among the friends of civil and religious liberty. That liberty was in peril. Great evils were struggling for perpetuity, and could only be broken down by great power. Milton felt that interests of infinite moment were at stake; and who will blame him for binding himself to them with the whole energy of his great mind, and for defending them with fervor and vehemence? We must not mistake Christian benevolence, as if it had but one voice, that of soft entreaty. It can speak in piercing and awful tones. There is constantly going on in our world a conflict between good and evil. The cause of human nature has always to wrestle with foes. All improvement is a victory won by struggles. It is especially true of those great periods which have been distinguished by revolutions in government and religion, and from which we date the most rapid movements of the human mind, that they have been signalized by conflict. Thus Christianity convulsed the world and grew up amidst storms; and the Reformation of Luther was a signal to universal war; and Liberty in both worlds has encountered opposition, over which she has triumphed only through her own immortal energies. At such periods, men, gifted with great power of thought and loftiness of sentiment, are especially summoned to the conflict with evil. They hear, as it were, in their own magnanimity and generous aspirations, the voice of a divinity; and thus commissioned, and burning with a passionate devotion to truth and freedom, they must and will speak with

an indignant energy, and they ought not to be measured by the standard of ordinary minds in ordinary times. Men of natural softness and timidity, of a sincere but effeminate virtue, will be apt to look on these bolder, hardier spirits, as violent, perturbed, and uncharitable; and the charge will not be wholly groundless. But that deep feeling of evils, which is necessary to effectual conflict with them, and which marks God's most powerful messengers to mankind, cannot breathe itself in soft and tender accents. The deeply moved soul will speak strongly, and ought to speak so as to move and shake nations.

We have offered these remarks as strongly applicable to Milton. He reverenced and loved human nature, and attached himself to its great interests with a fervor of which only such a mind was capable. He lived in one of those solemn periods which determine the character of ages to come. His spirit was stirred to its very centre by the presence of danger. He lived in the midst of the battle. That the ardor of his spirit sometimes passed the bounds of wisdom and charity, and poured forth unwarrantable invective, we see and lament. But the purity and loftiness of his mind break forth amidst his bitterest invectives. We see a noble nature still. We see, that no feigned love of truth and freedom was a covering for selfishness and malignity. He did indeed love and adore uncorrupted religion, and intellectual liberty, and let his name be enrolled among their truest champions. Milton has told us, in his own noble style, that he entered on his principal controversy with Episcopacy reluctantly, and only through a deep conviction of duty. The introduction to the second book of his "Reason of Church Gov-

ernment" shows us the workings of his mind on this subject, and is his best vindication from the charge we are now repelling. He says;

"Surely to every good and peaceable man, it must in nature needs be a hateful thing, to be the displeaser and molester of thousands; much better would it like him, doubtless, to be the messenger of gladness and contentment, which is his chief intended business to all mankind, but that they resist and oppose their own true happiness. But when God commands to take the trumpet, and blow a dolorous or a jarring blast, it lies not in man's will what he shall say, or what he shall conceal. . . . . This I foresee, that should the church be brought under heavy oppression, and God have given me ability the while to reason against that man that should be the author of so foul a deed, or should she, by blessing from above on the industry and courage of faithful men, change this her distracted estate into better days, without the least furtherance or contribution of those few talents which God at that present had lent me; I foresee what stories I should hear within myself, all my life after, of discourage and reproach. 'Timorous and ungrateful, the church of God is now again at the foot of her insulting enemies, and thou bewailest; what matters it for thee or thy bewailing? When time was, thou couldst not find a syllable of all that thou hast read or studied, to utter in her behalf. Yet ease and leisure was given thee for thy retired thoughts, out of the sweat of other men. Thou hadst the diligence, the parts, the language of a man, if a vain subject were to be adorned or beautified; but when the cause of God and his church was to be pleaded, for which purpose that tongue was given thee which thou hast, God listened if he could hear thy voice among his zealous servants, but thou wert dumb as a beast; from henceforward be that which thine own brutish silence hath made thee.' . . . . . But now, by this little diligence, mark what a privilege I have gained with good men and saints, to claim my right of lamenting the tribulations of the church, if she should suffer, when others, that have ventured nothing for her sake, have not the honor to be admitted mourners. But, if she lift up her drooping head and prosper, among those that have something more than wished her welfare, I have charter and freehold of rejoicing to me and my heirs.

"Concerning therefore this wayward subject against prelaty, the touching whereof is so distasteful and disquietous to a number of men, as by what hath been said I may deserve of charitable readers to be credited, that neither envy nor gall hath entered me upon this controversy, but the enforcement of conscience only, and a preventive fear lest the omitting of this duty should be against me, when I would store up to myself the good provision of peaceful hours." — *Vol. I. pp.* 139 – 141.*

He then goes on to speak of his consciousness of possessing great poetical powers, which he was most anxious to cultivate. Of these he speaks thus magnificently; —

"These abilities, wheresoever they be found, are the inspired gift of God rarely bestowed, but yet to some, though most abuse, in every nation; and are of power, — to imbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue, and public civility, to allay the perturbations of the mind, and set the affections in right tune; to celebrate in glorious and lofty hymns the throne and equipage of God's almightiness, and what he works, and what he suffers to be wrought with high providence in his church; to sing victorious agonies of martyrs and saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious nations, doing valiantly through faith against the enemies of Christ; to deplore the general relapses of kingdoms and states from justice and God's true worship; lastly, whatsoever in religion is holy and sublime, in virtue amiable or grave, whatsoever hath passion or admiration in all the changes of that which is called fortune from without, or the wily subtilties and refluxes of man's thoughts from within; all these things with a solid and treatable smoothness to paint out and describe." — *Vol. I. pp.* 145, 146.

He then gives intimations of his having proposed to himself a great poetical work, "a work," he says, —

"Not to be raised from the heat of youth, or the vapors of wine, like that which flows at waste from the pen of

* From the introduction to the second book of "The Reason of Church Government," &c. Vol. I. pp. 137, &c. of "A Selection from the English Prose Works of John Milton, Boston, 1826," to which all our references are made.

some vulgar amourist, or the trencher fury of a rhyming parasite, nor to be obtained by the invocation of dame Memory and her syren daughters, but by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit, who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his seraphim, with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases." — *Vol. I. p.* 148.

He then closes with a passage, showing from what principles he forsook these delightful studies for controversy; —

"I trust hereby to make it manifest with what small willingness I endure to interrupt the pursuit of no less hopes than these, and leave a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, to embark in a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes, put from beholding the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies. . . . . But were it the meanest underservice, if God by his secretary conscience enjoin it, it were sad for me if I should draw back; for me especially, now when all men offer their aid to help, ease, and lighten the difficult labors of the church, to whose service, by the intentions of my parents and friends, I was destined of a child, and in mine own resolutions, till coming to some maturity of years, and perceiving what tyranny had invaded the church, that he who would take orders must subscribe slave, and take an oath withal, which unless he took with a conscience that would retch, he must either strait perjure or split his faith, I thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before the sacred office of speaking, bought and begun with servitude and forswearing." — *Vol. I. p.* 149.

These passages, replete with Milton's genius and greatness of soul, show us the influences and motives under which his prose works were written, and help us to interpret passages, which, if taken separately, might justify us in ascribing to him a character of excessive indignation and scorn.

Milton's most celebrated prose work is his "Areopagitica, or a Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing," a noble work indeed, a precious manual of free-

dom, an arsenal of immortal weapons for the defence of man's highest prerogative, intellectual liberty. His "Reformation in England" and "Reason of Church Government" are the most important theological treatises published during his life. They were his earliest prose compositions, and thrown off with much haste, and on these accounts are more chargeable with defects of style, than any other of his writings. But these, with all their defects, abound in strong and elevated thought, and in power and felicity of expression. Their great blemish is an inequality of style, often springing from the conflict and opposition of the impulses under which he wrote. It is not uncommon to find, in the same sentence, his affluent genius pouring forth magnificent images and expressions, and suddenly his deep scorn for his opponents, suggesting and throwing into the midst of this splendor sarcasms and degrading comparisons altogether at variance with the general strain. From this cause, and from negligence, many powerful passages in his prose writings are marred by an incongruous mixture of unworthy allusions and phrases. In the close of his first work, that on "Reformation in England," he breaks out into an invocation and prayer to the Supreme Being, from which we extract a passage containing a remarkable intimation of his having meditated some great poetical enterprise from his earliest years, and giving full promise of that grandeur of thought and language which characterizes "Paradise Lost." Having "lifted up his hands to that eternal and propitious Throne, where nothing is readier than grace and refuge to the distresses of mortal suppliants," and besought God to perfect the work of civil and religious deliverance begun in England, he proceeds thus; —

"Then, amidst the hymns and hallelujahs of saints, *some one may perhaps be heard* offering at high strains in new and lofty measures, to sing and celebrate thy divine mercies, and marvellous judgments in this land throughout all ages, whereby this great and warlike nation, instructed and inured to the fervent and continual practice of truth and righteousness, and casting far from her the rags of her old vices, may press on hard to that high and happy emulation to be found the soberest, wisest, and most Christian people at that day, when Thou, the eternal and shortly expected King, shalt open the clouds to judge the several kingdoms of the world, and, distributing national honors and rewards to religious and just commonwealths, shalt put an end to all earthly tyrannies, proclaiming thy universal and mild monarchy through heaven and earth; where they undoubtedly, that by their labors, counsels, and prayers, have been earnest for the common good of religion and their country, shall receive, above the inferior orders of the blessed, the regal addition of principalities, legions, and thrones into their glorious titles, and, in supereminence of beatific vision, progressing the dateless and irrevoluble circle of eternity, shall clasp inseparable hands with joy and bliss, in overmeasure for ever."

*Vol. I. pp.* 69, 70.

We have not time to speak of Milton's political treatises. We close our brief remarks on his prose writings, with recommending them to all who can enjoy great beauties in the neighbourhood of great faults, and who would learn the compass, energy, and richness of our language; and still more do we recommend them to those, who desire to nourish in their breast magnanimity of sentiment and an unquenchable love of freedom. They bear the impress of that seal by which genius distinguishes its productions from works of learning and taste. The great and decisive test of genius is, that it calls forth *power* in the souls of others. It not merely gives knowledge, but breathes energy. There are authors, and among these Milton holds the highest

rank, in approaching whom we are conscious of an access of intellectual strength. A "virtue goes out" from them. We discern more clearly, not merely because a new light is thrown over objects, but because our own vision is strengthened. Sometimes a single word, spoken by the voice of genius, goes far into the heart. A hint, a suggestion, an undefined delicacy of expression, teaches more than we gather from volumes of less gifted men. The works which we should chiefly study, are not those which contain the greatest fund of knowledge, but which raise us into sympathy with the intellectual energy of the author, and through which a great mind multiplies itself, as it were, in the reader. Milton's prose works are imbued as really, if not as thoroughly, as his poetry, with this quickening power, and they will richly reward those who are receptive of this influence.

We now leave the writings of Milton to offer a few remarks on his *moral* qualities. His moral character was as strongly marked as his intellectual, and it may be expressed in one word, *magnanimity*. It was in harmony with his poetry. He had a passionate love of the higher, more commanding, and majestic virtues, and fed his youthful mind with meditations on the perfection of a human being. In a letter written to an Italian friend before his thirtieth year, and translated by Hayley, we have this vivid picture of his aspirations after virtue; —

"As to other points, what God may have determined for me I know not; but this I know, that if he ever instilled an intense love of moral beauty into the breast of any man, he has instilled it into mine. Ceres, in the fable, pursued not her daughter with a greater keenness of

inquiry, than I day and night the idea of perfection. Hence, wherever I find a man despising the false estimates of the vulgar, and daring to aspire, in sentiment, language, and conduct, to what the highest wisdom, through every age, has taught us as most excellent, to him I unite myself by a sort of necessary attachment; and if I am so influenced by nature or destiny, that by no exertion or labors of my own I may exalt myself to this summit of worth and honor, yet no powers of heaven or earth will hinder me from looking with reverence and affection upon those, who have thoroughly attained this glory, or appeared engaged in the successful pursuit of it."

His "Comus" was written in his twenty-sixth year, and on reading this exquisite work our admiration is awakened, not so much by observing how the whole spirit of poetry had descended on him at that early age, as by witnessing how his whole youthful soul was penetrated, awed, and lifted up by the austere charms, "the radiant light," the invincible power, the celestial peace of saintly virtue. He reverenced moral purity and elevation, not only for its own sake, but as the inspirer of intellect, and especially of the higher efforts of poetry. "I was confirmed," he says, in his usual noble style, —

"I was confirmed in this opinion; that he who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem; that is, a composition and pattern of the best and honorablest things; not presuming to sing of high praises of heroic men or famous cities, unless he have in himself the experience and the practice of all that which is praiseworthy."

*Vol. I. pp.* 237, 238.

We learn from his works, that he used his multifarious reading to build up within himself this reverence for virtue. Ancient history, the sublime musings of Plato, and the heroic self-abandonment of chivalry, joined their influences with prophets and apostles, in ding him "everlastingly in willing homage" to the

great, the honorable, and the lovely in character. A remarkable passage to this effect, we quote from his account of his youth ; —

"I betook me among those lofty fables and romances, which recount, in solemn cantos, the deeds of knighthood founded by our victorious kings, and from hence had in renown over all Christendom. There I read it in the oath of every knight, that he should defend to the expense of his best blood or of his life, if it so befell him, the honor and chastity of virgin or matron ; from whence even then I learned what a noble virtue chastity sure must be, to the defence of which so many worthies by such a dear adventure of themselves, had sworn. . . . . So that even these, books which to many others have been the fuel of wontonness and loose living, I cannot think how, unless by divine indulgence, proved to me so many incitements, as you have heard, to the love and steadfast observation of virtue." — *Vol. I. pp.* 238, 239.

All Milton's habits were expressive of a refined and self-denying character. When charged by his unprincipled slanderers with licentious habits, he thus gives an account of his morning hours ; —

"Those morning haunts are where they should be, at home ; not sleeping, or concocting the surfeits of an irregular feast, but up and stirring, in winter often ere the sound of any bell awake men to labor, or devotion ; in summer as oft with the bird that first rouses, or not much tardier, to read good authors, or cause them to be read, till the attention be weary or memory have its full fraught; then with useful and generous labors preserving the body's health and hardiness, to render lightsome, clear, and not lumpish obedience to the mind, to the cause of religion, and our country's liberty, when it shall require firm hearts in sound bodies to stand and cover their stations, rather than to see the ruin of our protestation, and the enforcement of a slavish life." — *Vol. I. p.* 233.

We have enlarged on the strictness and loftiness of Milton's virtue, not only from our interest in the sub-

ject, but that we may put to shame and silence, those men who make genius an apology for vice, and take the sacred fire, kindled by God within them, to inflame men's passions, and to minister to a vile sensuality.

We see Milton's greatness of mind in his fervent and constant attachment to liberty. Freedom, in all its forms and branches, was dear to him, but especially freedom of thought and speech, of conscience and worship, freedom to seek, profess, and propagate truth. The liberty of ordinary politicians, which protects men's outward rights, and removes restraints from the pursuit of property and outward good, fell very short of that for which Milton lived, and was ready to die. The tyranny which he hated most was that, which broke the intellectual and moral power of the community. The worst feature of the institutions which he assailed was, that they fettered the mind. He felt within himself, that the human mind had a principle of perpetual growth, that it was essentially diffusive and made for progress, and he wished every chain broken, that it might run the race of truth and virtue with increasing ardor and success. This attachment to a spiritual and refined freedom, which never forsook him in the hottest controversies, contributed greatly to protect his genius, imagination, taste, and sensibility, from the withering and polluting influences of public station, and of the rage of parties. It threw a hue of poetry over politics, and gave a sublime reference to his service of the commonwealth. The fact that Milton, in that stormy day, and amidst the trials of public office, kept his high faculties undepraved, was a proof of no common greatness. Politics, however they make the intellect active, sagacious, and inventive, within a cer-

tain sphere, generally extinguish its thirst for universal truth, paralyze sentiment and imagination, corrupt the simplicity of the mind, destroy that confidence in human virtue, which lies at the foundation of philanthropy and generous sacrifices, and end in cold and prudent selfishness. Milton passed through a revolution, which, in its last stages and issue, was peculiarly fitted to damp enthusiasm, to scatter the visions of hope, and to infuse doubts of the reality of virtuous principle; and yet the ardor, and moral feeling, and enthusiasm of his youth came forth unhurt, and even exalted, from the trial.

Before quitting the subject of Milton's devotion to liberty, it ought to be recorded, that he wrote his celebrated "Defence of the People of England," after being distinctly forewarned by his physicians, that the effect of this exertion would be the utter loss of sight. His reference to this part of his history, in a short poetical effusion, is too characteristic to be withheld. It is inscribed to Cyriac Skinner, the friend to whom he appears to have confided his lately discovered "Treatise on Christian Doctrine."

"Cyriac, this three years day these eyes, though clear,
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot,
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,
Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?
The conscience, Friend, to have lost them overplied
In Liberty's defence, my noble task,
Of which all Europe rings from side to side.
This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask,
Content though blind, had I no better guide."

*Sonnet XXII.*

We see Milton's magnanimity in the circumstances under which "Paradise Lost" was written. It was not in prosperity, in honor, and amidst triumphs, but in disappointment, desertion, and in what the world calls disgrace, that he composed that work. The cause, with which he had identified himself, had failed. His friends were scattered; liberty was trodden under foot; and her devoted champion was a by-word among the triumphant royalists. But it is the prerogative of true greatness to glorify itself in adversity, and to meditate and execute vast enterprises in defeat. Milton, fallen in outward condition, afflicted with blindness, disappointed in his best hopes, applied himself with characteristic energy to the sublimest achievement of intellect, solacing himself with great thoughts, with splendid creations, and with a prophetic confidence, that, however neglected in his own age, he was framing in his works a bond of union and fellowship with the illustrious spirits of a brighter day. We delight to contemplate him in his retreat and last years. To the passing spectator, he seemed fallen and forsaken, and his blindness was reproached as a judgment from God. But though sightless, he lived in light. His inward eye ranged through universal nature, and his imagination shed on it brighter beams than the sun. Heaven, and hell, and paradise were open to him. He visited past ages, and gathered round him ancient sages and heroes, prophets and apostles, brave knights and gifted bards. As he looked forward, ages of liberty dawned and rose to his view, and he felt that he was about to bequeath to them an inheritance of genius, "which would not fade away," and was to live in the memory, reverence, and love, of remotest generations.

We have enlarged on Milton's character, not only from the pleasure of paying that sacred debt which the mind owes to him who has quickened and delighted it, but from an apprehension that Milton has not yet reaped his due harvest of esteem and veneration. The mists which the prejudices and bigotry of Johnson spread over his bright name, are not yet wholly scattered, though fast passing away. We wish not to disparage Johnson. We could find no pleasure in sacrificing one great man to the *manes* of another. But we owe it to Milton and to other illustrious names, to say, that Johnson has failed of the highest end of biography, which is to give immortality to virtue, and to call forth fervent admiration towards those who have shed splendor on past ages. We acquit Johnson, however, of intentional misrepresentation. He did not, and could not, appreciate Milton. We doubt whether two other minds, having so little in common as those of which we are now speaking, can be found in the higher walks of literature. Johnson was great in his own sphere, but that sphere was comparatively "of the earth," whilst Milton's was only inferior to that of angels. It was customary, in the day of Johnson's glory, to call him a giant, to class him with a mighty, but still an earth-born race. Milton we should rank among seraphs. Johnson's mind acted chiefly on man's actual condition, on the realities of life, on the springs of human action, on the passions which now agitate society, and he seems hardly to have dreamed of a higher state of the human mind than was then exhibited. Milton, on the other hand, burned with a deep, yet calm love of moral grandeur and celestial purity. He thought, not so much of what man is, as of what he might become. His own mind was a revelation to him

of a higher condition of humanity, and to promote this he thirsted and toiled for freedom, as the element for the growth and improvement of his nature. — In religion Johnson was gloomy and inclined to superstition, and on the subject of government leaned towards absolute power; and the idea of reforming either, never entered his mind but to disturb and provoke it. The church and the civil polity, under which he lived, seemed to him perfect, unless he may have thought that the former would be improved by a larger infusion of Romish rites and doctrines, and the latter by an enlargement of the royal prerogative. Hence a tame acquiescence in the present forms of religion and government marks his works. Hence we find so little in his writings which is electric and soul-kindling, and which gives the reader a consciousness of being made for a state of loftier thought and feeling than the present. Milton's whole soul, on the contrary, revolted against the maxims of legitimacy, hereditary faith, and servile reverence for established power. He could not brook the bondage to which men had bowed for ages. "Reformation" was the first word of public warning which broke from his youthful lips, and the hope of it was the solace of his declining years. The difference between Milton and Johnson may be traced, not only in these great features of mind, but in their whole characters. Milton was refined and spiritual in his habits, temperate almost to abstemiousness, and refreshed himself after intellectual effort by music. Johnson inclined to more sensual delights. Milton was exquisitely alive to the outward creation, to sounds, motions, and forms, to natural beauty and grandeur. Johnson, through defect of physical organization, if not through deeper deficiency, had little susceptibility of

these pure and delicate pleasures, and would not have exchanged the Strand for the vale of Tempe or the gardens of the Hesperides. How could Johnson be just to Milton! The comparison, which we have instituted, has compelled us to notice Johnson's defects. But we trust we are not blind to his merits. His stately march, his pomp and power of language, his strength of thought, his reverence for virtue and religion, his vigorous logic, his practical wisdom, his insight into the springs of human action, and the solemn pathos which occasionally pervades his descriptions of life and his references to his own history, command our willing admiration. That he wanted enthusiasm and creative imagination and lofty sentiment, was not his fault. We do not blame him for not being Milton. We love intellectual power in all its forms, and delight in the variety of mind. We blame him only that his passions, prejudices, and bigotry engaged him in the unworthy task of obscuring the brighter glory of one of the most gifted and virtuous men. We would even treat what we deem the faults of Johnson with a tenderness approaching respect; for they were results, to a degree which man cannot estimate, of a diseased, irritable, nervous, unhappy physical temperament, and belonged to the body more than to the mind. We only ask the friends of genius not to put their faith in Johnson's delineations of it. His biographical works are tinged with his notoriously strong prejudices, and, of all his "Lives," we hold that of Milton to be the most apocryphal.

We here close our general remarks on Milton's intellectual and moral qualities. We venerate him as a man of genius, but still more as a man of magnanimity

and Christian virtue, who regarded genius and poetry as sacred gifts, imparted to him, not to amuse men or to build up a reputation, but that he might quicken and call forth what was great and divine in his fellow-creatures, and might secure the only true fame, the admiration of minds which his writings were to kindle and exalt.

We come now to the examination of the newly discovered "Treatise on Christian Doctrine." This work, we have said, owes its chief interest to the character of its author. From its very nature, it cannot engage and fix general attention. It consists very much of collections of texts of Scripture, which, however exciting in their proper places, are read with little thought or emotion when taken from their ordinary connexion, and marshalled under systematic heads. Milton aims to give us the doctrines of revelation in its own words. We have them in a phraseology long familiar to us, and we are disappointed; for we expected to see them, not in the language of the Bible, but as existing in the mind of Milton, modified by his peculiar intellect and sensibility, combined and embodied with his various knowledge, illustrated by the analogies, brightened by the new lights, and clothed with the associations, with which they were surrounded by this gifted man. We hoped to see these doctrines as they were viewed by Milton in his moments of solemn feeling and deep contemplation, when they pervaded and moved his whole soul. Still there are passages in which Milton's mind is laid open to us. We refer to the parts of the work, where the peculiarity of his opinions obliges him to state his reasons for adopting

them; and these we value highly for the vigor and independence of intellect with which they are impressed. The work is plain and unambitious in style. Its characteristics are a calm earnestness, and that profound veneration for Scripture, which certain denominations of Christians, who have little congeniality with Milton, seem to claim as a monopoly.

His introduction is worthy every man's attention, as a deliberate, mild assertion of the dearest right of human nature, that of free inquiry.

"If I communicate the result of my inquiries to the world at large; if, as God is my witness, it be with a friendly and benignant feeling towards mankind, that I readily give as wide a circulation as possible to what I esteem my best and richest possession, I hope to meet with a candid reception from all parties, and that none at least will take unjust offence, even though many things should be brought to light, which will at once be seen to differ from certain received opinions. I earnestly beseech all lovers of truth, not to cry out that the church is thrown into confusion by that freedom of discussion and inquiry, which is granted to the schools, and ought certainly to be refused to no believer, since we are ordered *to prove all things*, and since the daily progress of the light of truth is productive, far less of disturbance to the church, than of illumination and edification."— *Vol. I. pp.* 5, 6.

"It has also been my object to make it appear from the opinions I shall be found to have advanced, whether new or old, of how much consequence to the Christian religion is the liberty, not only of winnowing and sifting every doctrine, but also of thinking and even writing respecting it, according to our individual faith and persuasion; an inference which will be stronger in proportion to the weight and importance of those opinions, or rather in proportion to the authority of Scripture, on the abundant testimony of which they rest. Without this liberty there is neither religion nor gospel, — force alone prevails, by which it is disgraceful for the Christian religion to be supported. Without this liberty we are still enslaved, not indeed, as formerly, under the divine law, but, what

is worst of all, under the law of man, or, to speak more truly, under a barbarous tyranny."— *Vol. I. pp.* 7, 8.

On that great subject, the character of God, Milton has given nothing particularly worthy of notice, except that he is more disposed, than Christians in general, to conceive of the Supreme Being under the forms and affections of human nature.

"If God habitually assign to himself the members and form of man, why should we be afraid of attributing to him what he attributes to himself, so long as what is imperfection and weakness, when viewed in reference to ourselves, be considered as most complete and excellent whenever it is imputed to God."— *Vol. I. p.* 23.

Milton is not the first Christian who has thought to render the Supreme Being more interesting by giving him human shape. We doubt the wisdom of this expedient. To spiritualize our conceptions of him seems to us the true process for strengthening our intimacy with him; for in this way only can we think of him as immediately present to our minds. As far as we give him a material form, we must assign to him a place, and that place will almost necessarily be a distant one, and thus we shall remove him from the soul, which is his true temple. Besides, a definite form clashes with God's infinity, which is his supreme distinction and on no account to be obscured; for, strange as it may seem to those who know not their own nature, this incomprehensible attribute is that which above all things constitutes the correspondence or adaptation, if we may so speak, of God to the human mind.

In treating of God's efficiency, Milton strenuously maintains human freedom, in opposition to the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination. He maintains, that God's decrees do not encroach on moral liberty; for

our free agency is the very object decreed and predestined by the Creator. He maintains, that some of the passages of Scripture, which speak of election, are to be understood of an election to outward privileges, not to everlasting life; and that in other texts, which relate to the future state, the election spoken of is not an arbitrary choice of individuals, but of that class or descriptions of persons, be it large or small, who shall comply with the prescribed terms of salvation; in other words, it is a conditional, not an absolute election, and such that every individual, if he will, may be included in it. Milton has so far told us truth. We wish that we could add, that he had thrown new light on free agency. This great subject has indeed baffled as yet the deepest thinkers, and seems now to be consigned, with other sublime topics, under the sweeping denomination of "metaphysics," to general neglect. But let it not be given up in despair. The time is coming, when the human intellect is to strike into new fields, and to view itself and its Creator and the universe from new positions, and we trust, that the darkness which has so long hung over our moral nature will be gradually dispersed. This attribute of free agency, through which an intelligent being is strictly and properly a cause, an agent, an originator of moral good or moral evil, and not a mere machine, determined by outward influences, or by a secret, yet resistless efficiency of God, which virtually makes Him the author and sole author of all human actions, — this moral freedom, which is the best image of the creative energy of the Deity, seems to us the noblest object of philosophical investigation. However questioned and darkened by a host of metaphysicians, it is recognised in the common con-

sciousness of every human being. It is the ground of responsibility, the fountain of moral feeling. It is involved in all moral judgments and affections, and thus gives to social life its whole interest; whilst it is the chief tie between the soul and its Creator. The fact that philosophers have attempted to discard free agency from their explanations of moral phenomena, and to subject all human action to necessity, to mechanical causes, or other extraneous influences, is proof enough, that the science of the mind has as yet penetrated little beneath the surface, that the depths of the soul are still unexplored.

Milton naturally passes from his chapter on the Supreme Being, to the consideration of those topics which have always been connected with this part of theology; we mean, the character of Jesus Christ, and the nature of the Holy Spirit. All our readers are probably aware, that Milton has here declared himself an Antitrinitarian, and strenuously asserted the strict and proper unity of God. His chapter on "The Son of God" is the most elaborate one in the work. His "Prefatory Remarks" are highly interesting, as joining with a manly assertion of his right, an affectionate desire to conciliate the Christians from whom he differed.

"I cannot enter upon subjects of so much difficulty as the *Son of God* and the *Holy Spirit*, without again premising a few introductory words. If indeed I were a member of the Church of Rome, which requires implicit obedience to its creed on all points of faith, I should have acquiesced from education or habit in its simple decree and authority, even though it denies that the doctrine of the Trinity, as now received, is capable of being proved from any passage of Scripture. But since I enroll myself among the number of those who acknowledge the Word of God alone as the rule of faith, and freely ad-

vance what appears to me much more clearly deducible from the Holy Scriptures than the commonly received opinion, I see no reason why any one, who belongs to the same Protestant or Reformed Church, and professes to acknowledge the same rule of faith as myself, should take offence at my freedom, particularly as I impose my authority on no one, but merely propose what I think more worthy of belief than the creed in general acceptation. I only entreat, that my readers will ponder and examine my statements in a spirit which desires to discover nothing but the truth, and with a mind free from prejudice. For, without intending to oppose the authority of Scripture, which I consider inviolably sacred, I only take upon myself to refute human interpretations as often as the occasion requires, conformably to my right, or rather to my duty, as a man. If indeed those, with whom I have to contend, were able to produce direct attestation from Heaven to the truth of the doctrine which they espouse, it would be nothing less than impiety to venture to raise, I do not say a clamor, but so much as a murmur against it. But, inasmuch as they can lay claim to nothing more than human powers, assisted by that spiritual illumination which is common to all, it is not unreasonable that they should on their part allow the privileges of diligent research and free discussion to another inquirer, who is seeking truth through the same means and in the same way as themselves, and whose desire of benefiting mankind is equal to their own." — *Vol. I. pp.* 103 - 105.

Milton teaches, that the Son of God is a distinct being from God, and inferior to him, that he existed before the world was made, that he is the first of the creation of God, and that afterwards all other things were made by him, as the instrument or minister of his Father. He maintains, in agreement with Dr. Clarke, that the Holy Spirit is a person, an intelligent agent, but created and inferior to God. This opinion of Milton is the more remarkable, because he admits, that, before the time of Christ, the Jews, though accustomed to the phrase, Holy Spirit, never attached to it the

idea of personality, and that, both in the Old and the New Testament, it is often used to express God himself, or his power and agency. It is strange, that, after these concessions, he could have found a difficulty in giving a figurative interpretation to the few passages in the New Testament, which speak of the Holy Spirit as a person.

We are unable within our limits to give a sketch of Milton's strong reasoning against the supreme divinity of Jesus Christ. We must, however, pause a moment to thank God that he has raised up this illustrious advocate of the long obscured doctrine of the Divine Unity. We can now bring forward the three greatest and noblest minds of modern times, and, we may add, of the Christian era, as witnesses to that Great Truth, of which, in an humbler and narrower sphere, we desire to be the defenders. Our Trinitarian adversaries are perpetually ringing in our ears the names of Fathers and Reformers. We take Milton, Locke, and Newton, and place them in our front, and want no others to oppose to the whole array of great names on the opposite side. Before these intellectual suns, the stars of self-named Orthodoxy "hide their diminished heads." To these eminent men God communicated such unusual measures of light and mental energy, that their names spring up spontaneously, when we think or would speak of the greatness of our nature. Their theological opinions were the fruits of patient, profound, reverent study of the Scriptures. They came to this work with minds not narrowed by a technical, professional education, but accustomed to broad views, to the widest range of thought. They were shackled by no party connexions. They were warped by no clerical

ambition, and subdued by no clerical timidity. They came to this subject in the fulness of their strength, with free minds open to truth, and with unstained purity of life. They came to it in an age, when the doctrine of the Trinity was instilled by education, and upheld by the authority of the church, and by penal laws. And what did these great and good men, whose intellectual energy and love of truth have made them the chief benefactors of the human mind, what, we ask, did they discover in the Scriptures? a triple divinity? three infinite agents? three infinite objects of worship? three persons, each of whom possesses his own distinct offices, and yet shares equally in the godhead with the rest? No! Scripture joined with nature and with that secret voice in the heart, which even idolatry could not always stifle, and taught them to bow reverently before the One Infinite Father, and to ascribe to him alone, supreme, self-existent divinity. — Our principal object in these remarks has been to show, that, as far as great names are arguments, the cause of Anti-trinitarianism, or of God's proper Unity, is supported by the strongest. But we owe it to truth to say, that we put little trust in these fashionable proofs. The chief use of great names in religious controversy is, to balance and neutralize one another, that the unawed and unfettered mind may think and judge with a due self-reverence, and with a solemn sense of accountableness to God alone.

We have called Milton an Anti-trinitarian. But we have no desire to identify him with any sect. His mind was too independent and universal to narrow itself to human creeds and parties. He is supposed to have separated himself, in his last years, from all the denomi-

nations around him; and, were he now living, we are not sure that he would find one, to which he would be strongly attracted. He would probably stand first among that class of Christians, more numerous than is supposed, and, we hope, increasing, who are too jealous of the rights of the mind, and too dissatisfied with the clashing systems of the age, to attach themselves closely to any party; in whom the present improved state of theology has created a consciousness of defect, rather than the triumph of acquisition; who, however partial to their own creed, cannot persuade themselves, that it is the ultimate attainment of the human mind, and that distant ages will repeat its articles as reverently as the Catholics do the decrees of Trent; who contend earnestly for free inquiry, not because all who inquire will think as they do, but because some at least may be expected to outstrip them, and to be guides to higher truth. With this nameless and spreading class we have strong sympathies. We want new light, and care not whence it comes; we want reformers worthy of the name; and we should rejoice in such a manifestation of Christianity, as would throw all present systems into obscurity.

We come now to a topic on which Milton will probably startle a majority of readers. He is totally opposed, as were most of the ancient philosophers, to the doctrine of God's creating the universe out of nothing. He maintains, that there can be no action without a passive material on which the act is exerted, and that accordingly the world was framed out of a preëxistent matter. To the question, What and whence is this primary matter? he answers, It is from God, "an efflux of the Deity." "It proceeded from God," and conse-

quently no additional existence was produced by creation, nor is matter capable of annihilation. A specimen of his speculations on this subject, is given in the following quotation.

"It is clear then, that the world was framed out of matter of some kind or other. For, since action and passion are relative terms, and since, consequently, no agent can act externally, unless there be some patient, such as matter, it appears impossible that God could have created this world out of nothing; not from any defect of power on his part, but because it was necessary that something should have previously existed capable of receiving passively the exertion of the divine efficacy. Since, therefore, both Scripture and reason concur in pronouncing that all these things were made, not out of nothing, but out of matter, it necessarily follows, that matter must either have always existed independently of God, or have originated from God at some particular point of time. That matter should have been always independent of God, (seeing that it is only a passive principle, dependent on the Deity, and subservient to him; and seeing, moreover, that as in number, considered abstractly, so also in time or eternity, there is no inherent force or efficacy,) that matter, I say, should have existed of itself from all eternity, is inconceivable. If, on the contrary, it did not exist from all eternity, it is difficult to understand from whence it derives its origin. There remains, therefore, but one solution of the difficulty, for which moreover we have the authority of Scripture, namely, that all things are of God." — *Vol. I. pp.* 236, 237.

This doctrine naturally led Milton to another; viz. that there is no ground for the supposed distinction between body and soul; for, if matter is an "efflux of the Deity," it is plainly susceptible of intellectual functions. Accordingly our author affirms, —

"That man is a living being, intrinsically and properly one and individual, not compound or separable, not according to the common opinion, made up and framed of two distinct and different natures, as of soul and body,

— but the whole man is soul, and the soul man; that is to say, a body, or substance, individual, animated, sensitive, and rational." — *Vol. I. pp.* 250, 251.

We here learn that a passage in "Paradise Lost," which we have admired as poetry, was deemed by Milton sound philosophy.

"O Adam, One Almighty is, from whom
All things proceed, and up to him return,
If not depraved from good, created all
Such to perfection, *one first matter all,*
Indued with various forms, various degrees
Of substance, and, in things that live, of life:
But more refined, more spirituous, and pure,
As nearer to him placed or nearer tending,
Each in their several active spheres assigned,
*Till body up to spirit work*, in bounds
Proportioned to each kind. So from the root
Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
More aery, last the bright consummate flower
Spirits odorous breathes; flowers and their fruit,
Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed,
To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
To *intellectual*." — *Par. Lost. B. V. lines* 469 – 485.

These speculations of Milton will be received in this age with more favor, or with less aversion, than in his own; for, from the time of Locke, the discussions of philosophers have tended to unsettle our notions of matter, and no man is hardy enough now to say what it is, or what it may not be. The idealism of Berkeley, though it has never organized a sect, has yet sensibly influenced the modes of thinking among metaphysicians; and the coincidence of this system with the theory of certain Hindoo philosophers may lead us to suspect, that it contains some great latent truth, of which the European and Hindoo intellect, so generally at variance, have caught a glimpse. Matter is indeed a Proteus, which escapes us at the moment we hope to seize

it. Priestley was anxious to make the soul material; but, for this purpose, he was obliged to change matter from a substance into a power, that is, into no matter at all; so that he destroyed, in attempting to diffuse it. We have thrown out these remarks, to rescue Milton's memory from the imputation, which he was the last man to deserve, of irreverence towards God; for of this some will deem him guilty in tracing matter to the Deity as its fountain. Matter, which seems to common people so intelligible, is still wrapped in mystery. We know it only by its relation to mind, or as an assemblage of powers to awaken certain sensations. Of its relation to God, we may be said to know nothing. Perhaps, as knowledge advances, we shall discover, that the Creator is bound to his works by stronger and more intimate ties, than we now imagine. We do not then quarrel with such suggestions as Milton's, though we cannot but wonder at the earnestness with which he follows out such doubtful speculations.

Milton next proceeds to the consideration of man's state in Paradise, and, as marriage was the only social relation then subsisting, he introduces here his views of that institution, and of polygamy and divorce. These views show, if not the soundness, yet the characteristic independence of his mind. No part of his book has given such offence as his doctrine of the lawfulness of polygamy, and yet nowhere is he less liable to reproach. It is plain that his error was founded on his reverence for Scripture. He saw that polygamy was allowed to the best men in the Old Testament, to patriarchs before the law, who, he says, were the objects of God's special favor, and to eminent individuals in subsequent ages; and, finding no prohibition of it in the New Tes-

tament, he believed, that not only holy men would be traduced, but Scripture dishonored, by pronouncing it morally evil. We are aware that some will say, that the practice *is* condemned in the New Testament; and we grant that it is censured by implication in these words of Christ, "Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery."* But we believe it to be an indisputable fact, that, although Christianity was first preached in Asia, which had been from the earliest ages the seat of polygamy, the Apostles never denounced it as a crime, and never required their converts to put away all wives but one. "What then?" some may say. "Are you too the advocates of the lawfulness of polygamy?" We answer, No. We consider our religion as decidedly hostile to this practice; and we add, what seems to us of great importance, that this hostility is not the less decided, because no express prohibition of polygamy is found in the New Testament; for Christianity is not a system of precise legislation, marking out with literal exactness every thing to be done, and every thing to be avoided; but an inculcation of broad principles, which it intrusts to individuals and to society to be applied according to their best discretion. It is through this generous peculiarity, that Christianity is fitted to be a universal religion. Through this, it can subsist and blend itself with all stages of society, and can live in the midst of abuses, which it silently and powerfully overcomes, but against which it would avail little, were it immediately to lift up the voice of denunciation. We all know that long-cherished corruptions, which have sent their roots

* Matt. xix. 9.

through the whole frame of a community, cannot be torn up at once, without dissolving society. To Christianity is committed the sublime office of eradicating all the errors and evils of the world; but this it does by a process corresponding with man's nature, by working a gradual revolution in the mind, which, in its turn, works a safe and effectual revolution in manners and life. No argument, therefore, in favor of a practice, can be adduced from the fact, that it is not explicitly reprobated in the New Testament. For example, Christianity went forth into communities, where multitudes were held in slavery, and all ranks were ground and oppressed by despotism; abuses on which the spirit of our religion frowns as sternly as on any which can be named. Yet Christianity did not command the master to free his slaves, or the despot to descend from his absolute throne; but satisfied itself with proclaiming sublime truths in regard to God's paternal character and administration, and broad and generous principles of action, leaving to these the work of breaking every chain, by a gradual, inward, irresistible influence, and of asserting the essential equality and unalienable rights of the whole human race. — We cannot leave this topic, without adding, that not only Milton's error on polygamy, but many other noxious mistakes, have resulted from measuring Christianity by the condition of the primitive church, as if *that* were the standard of faith and practice, as if every thing allowed then were wise and good, as if the religion were then unfolded in all its power and extent. The truth is, that Christianity was then in its infancy. The Apostles communicated its great truths to the rude minds of Jews and Heathens; but the primitive church did not, and could not, under-

stand all that was involved in those principles, all the applications of which they are susceptible, all the influences they were to exert on the human mind, all the combinations they were to form with the new truths which time was to unfold, all the new lights in which they were to be placed, all the adaptations to human nature and to more advanced states of society, which they were progressively to manifest. In the first age, the religion was administered with a wise and merciful conformity to the capacities of its recipients. With the progress of intelligence, and the developement of the moral faculties, Christianity is freeing itself, and ought to be freed, from the local, temporary, and accidental associations of its childhood. Its great principles are coming forth more distinctly and brightly, and condemning abuses and errors, which have passed current for ages. This great truth, for such we deem it, that Christianity is a growing light, and that it must be more or less expounded by every age for itself, was not sufficiently apprehended by Milton; nor is it now understood as it will be. For want of apprehending it, Christianity is administered now, too much as it was in ages, when nothing of our literature, philosophy, and spirit of improvement existed; and consequently it does not, we fear, exert that entire and supreme sway over strong and cultivated minds, which is its due, and which it must one day obtain.

Milton has connected with polygamy the subject of divorce, on which he is known to have differed from many Christians. He strenuously maintains in the work under review, and more largely in other treatises, that the violation of the marriage bed is not the sole ground of divorce, but that "the perpetual interruption of

peace and affection, by mutual differences and unkindness, is a sufficient reason" for dissolving the conjugal relation. On this topic we cannot enlarge.

We now arrive at that part of Milton's work, in which his powerful mind might have been expected to look beyond the prevalent opinions of his day, but in which he has followed the beaten road, almost without deviation, seldom noticing difficulties, and hardly seeming to know their existence. We refer to the great subjects of the moral condition of mankind, and of redemption by Jesus Christ. The doctrine of original sin he has assumed as true, and his faith in it was evidently strengthened by his doctrine of the identity of the soul with the body, in consequence of which he teaches, that souls are propagated from parents to children, and not immediately derived from God, and that they are born with an hereditary taint, just as the body contracts hereditary disease. It is humbling to add, that he supports this doctrine of the propagation of sin by physical contagion, on the ground that it relieves the Creator from the charge of originating the corruption, which we are said to bring into life; as if the infinitely pure and good God could, by a covert agency, infect with moral evil the passive and powerless mind of the infant, and then absolve himself of the horrible work by imputing it to instruments of his own ordination! Milton does not, however, believe in total depravity, feeling that this would free men from guilt, by taking away all power; and he therefore leaves us a portion of the divine image, not enough to give us a chance of virtue, but enough to take away excuse from sin. Such are the "tender mercies" of theology! With respect to Christ's mediation, he supposes, that Christ saves us by bearing our

punishment, and in this way satisfying God's justice. His views indeed are not expressed with much precision, and seem to have been formed without much investigation. On these great subjects, of human nature and redemption, we confess, we are disappointed in finding the spirit of Milton satisfying itself with the degrading notions which prevailed around him. But we remember, that it is the order of Providence, that the greatest minds should sympathize much with their age, and that they contribute the more to the progress of mankind, by not advancing too fast and too far beyond their contemporaries. In this part of his work, Milton maintains, that the death threatened to sin extends equally to body and soul, which indeed he was bound to do, as he holds the soul and body to be one; and he then proceeds to defend, with his usual power, the necessary inference, that all consciousness is suspended between death and the resurrection. We have no faith in this doctrine; but we respect the courage with which he admits and maintains whatever can be fairly deduced from his opinions.

Having concluded the subject of redemption, he passes to what he calls "man's renovation, or the change whereby the sinner is brought into a state of grace;" and here, though he is not always perspicuous, yet he seldom deviates from what was then the beaten road. We owe it, however, to Milton, to say, that, although he sometimes approached, he never adopted Calvinism. All the distinguished articles of that creed, total depravity, election and reprobation, Christ dying for the elect only, irresistible grace, the perseverance of the saints, and justification by mere faith, all are denied and opposed by him, and some with great strength.

Swayed as Milton was by the age in which he lived, his spirit could not be subdued to the heart-withering faith of the Genevan school.

We now come to a subject in which Milton was deeply interested; we mean Christian Liberty, under which head may be included the discipline of the church, the power of ministers, and the rights of the people. To vindicate the liberty of Christians, and to secure them from all outward impositions and ordinances, he maintains that the whole Mosaic law is abolished, so that no part is binding on Christians; a doctrine which may startle many, who believe that the moral precepts of that law are as binding now as ever. But such persons differ little in reality from Milton, whose true meaning is, that these precepts bind Christians, not through the authority of Moses, which is wholly done away, but only because they are taken up and incorporated into Christianity, which is our only law, and which has set forth whatever was permanently valuable in Judaism, in a more perfect form, and with more powerful sanctions.

As another branch of the liberty of Christians, he maintains, as we may well suppose, the right of every believer to consult the Scriptures and to judge of them for himself. Not satisfied with this, he takes the ground of Quakerism, and maintains that the Christian, in addition to the Scriptures, has an inward guide, with which no human authority should interfere.

"Under the gospel we possess, as it were, a twofold Scripture, one external, which is the written word, and the other internal, which is the Holy Spirit, written in the hearts of believers, according to the promise of God, and with the intent that it should by no means be neglected." —*Vol. II. p.* 172. "The external scripture . . . . . has

been liable to frequent corruption, and in some instances has been corrupted, through the number, and occasionally the bad faith, of those by whom it has been handed down, the variety and discrepancy of the original manuscripts, and the additional diversity produced by subsequent transcripts and printed editions. But the Spirit which leads to truth cannot be corrupted, neither is it easy to deceive a man who is really spiritual."—*p.* 173. "It is difficult to conjecture the purpose of Providence in committing the writings of the New Testament to such uncertain and variable guardianship, unless it were to teach us, by this very circumstance, that the Spirit which is given to us is a more certain guide than Scripture, whom, therefore, it is our duty to follow."—*p.* 174. "Hence it follows, that when an acquiescence in human opinions or an obedience to human authority in matters of religion is exacted, in the name either of the church or of the Christian magistrate, from those who are themselves led individually by the Spirit of God, this is in effect to impose a yoke, not on man, but on the Holy Spirit itself."—*p.* 176.

This, in words, is genuine Quakerism; but whether Milton understood by the Holy Spirit that *immediate* revelation, which forms the leading doctrine of that creed, we doubt. To this doctrine it may be objected, and we think Milton must have felt the objection, that it disparages and discourages our faculties, and produces inaction of mind, leading men to expect from a sudden flash from Heaven, the truth which we are taught to seek by the right use of our own powers. We imagine that Milton believed, that the Holy Spirit works with and by our own understandings, and, instead of superseding reason, invigorates and extends it. But this is not the only place where his precise views are obscured by general expressions, or by rapid and superficial notices of subjects.

In Milton's views of the church and the ministry,

we have other proofs of his construing the Scriptures in the manner most favorable to Christian liberty. He teaches, that the universal church has no head but Christ, and that the power arrogated by popes, councils, and bishops, is gross usurpation. In regard to particular churches, he is a strict Congregationalist. Each church, he says, is competent to its own government, and connected with others only by the bond of charity. No others are authorized to interfere with any of its concerns, but in the way of brotherly counsel.

"Every church consisting of the above parts," i. e. well instructed believers, "however small its numbers, is to be considered as in itself an integral and perfect church, so far as regards its religious rights; nor has it any superior on earth, whether individual, or assembly, or convention, to whom it can be lawfully required to render submission; inasmuch as no believer out of its pale, nor any order or council of men whatever, has a greater right than itself, to expect a participation in the written word and the promises, in the presence of Christ, in the presiding influence of the Spirit, and in those gracious gifts which are the reward of united prayer."

*Vol. II. p.* 194.

The choice of the minister, he says, belongs to the people. The minister, if possible, should serve the church gratuitously, and live by the labor of his own hands. This unpaid service he pronounces more noble and consonant to our Lord's example and that of the Apostles. In accordance with these views, he favors the idea of a church consisting of few members.

"All that pertains to the worship of God and the salvation of believers, all, in short, that is necessary to constitute a church, may be duly and orderly transacted in a particular church, within the walls of a private house, and where the numbers assembled are inconsiderable. Nay, such a church, when in compliance with the in-

terested views of its pastor it allows of an increase of numbers beyond what is convenient, deprives itself in a great measure of the advantages to be derived from meeting in common."— *Vol. II. p.* 194.

He maintains, that ministers are not to monopolize public instruction, or the administration of the ordinances ; but that all Christians, having sufficient gifts, are to participate in these services.

"The custom of holding assemblies is to be maintained, not after the present mode, but according to the apostolical institution, which did not ordain that an individual, and he a stipendiary, should have the sole right of speaking from a higher place, but that each believer in turn should be authorized to speak, or prophesy, or teach, or exhort, according to his gifts ; insomuch that even the weakest among the brethren had the privilege of asking questions, and consulting the elders and more experienced members of the congregation."— *Vol. II. p.* 203. "Any believer is competent to act as an *ordinary minister*, according as convenience may require, provided only he be endowed with the necessary gifts ; these gifts constituting his mission."—*p.* 153. "If therefore it be competent to any believer whatever to preach the gospel, provided he be furnished with the requisite gifts, it is also competent to him to administer the rite of baptism ; inasmuch as the latter office is inferior to the former."—*p.* 157. "With regard to the Lord's supper also, it has been shown, in the preceding chapter, that all are entitled to participate in that rite, but that the privilege of dispensing the elements is confined to no particular man, or order of men."—*p.* 158.

We entirely accord with the spirit of freedom which these passages breathe ; but from some of the particular views we dissent. The great error of Milton lies in supposing that the primitive church was meant to be a model for all ages. But can we suppose that the church at its birth, when it was poor, persecuted, hemmed in by Judaism and Heathenism, supplied imperfectly with

written rules and records, dependent for instruction chiefly on inspired teachers, and composed of converts who had grown up and been steeped in Jewish and Heathen errors, can we imagine, that in these circumstances the church took a form which it ought to retain as sacred and unalterable, in its triumphs, and prosperity, and diffusion, and in ages of greater light and refinement? We know that in the first ages there were no ministers with salaries, or edifices for public worship. Christians met in private houses, and sometimes in the obscurest they could find. On these occasions, the services were not monopolized by an individual, but shared by the fraternity; nor is there a hint in the New Testament that the administration of the Lord's supper and baptism was confined to the minister. But in all this we have no rule for the present day. Indeed it seems to us utterly repugnant to the idea of a universal religion, intended for all ages and nations, and for all the progressive states of society to the end of the world, to suppose that in its infancy it established an order of worship, instruction, and discipline, which was to remain inviolable in all future times. This doctrine of an inflexible form seems to us servile, superstitious, and disparaging to Christianity. Our religion is too spiritual and inward, and cares too little about its exterior, to bind itself in this everlasting chain. The acknowledged indefiniteness of the New Testament, in regard to this subject, is no mean proof of the enlarged and prospective wisdom of its Founder. We believe, that, with the diffusion of liberal views, the question will arise, whether our religion cannot be taught and administered in methods and forms more adapted, than those which now prevail, to its spirit and great design,

to the principles of human nature, and to the condition and wants of society. Among the changes which may grow from this discussion, we do not anticipate the adoption of Milton's plan of sentencing ministers to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow ; for we think that we see reasons, in the general spread of knowledge, for enlarging their means and opportunities of study and intellectual culture, that they may meet the increasing demand for more enlightened inculcation of Christian truth. At the same time, it seems to us not unlikely, that, in conformity to Milton's suggestion, public instruction, instead of continuing to be a monopoly of ministers, may be extended freely to men of superior intelligence and piety, and that the results of this arrangement may be, the infusion of new life, power, and practical wisdom into religious teaching, and the substitution of a more natural, free, and various eloquence, for the technical and monotonous mode of treating subjects, which clings so often and so obstinately to the performances of the pulpit. — Again, we do not expect, among the changes of forms and outward worship, that Christians, to meet our author's views, will shut their churches and meet in private houses ; for large religious edifices, and large congregations, seem to us among the important means of collecting, and interesting in Christianity, the mass of the community. But perhaps narrower associations for religious improvement may be formed, in which the formalities of public worship will be relaxed, and Christians may reap the benefits of the more familiar and confidental meetings of the primitive converts. It is indeed a great question, how the public administration of Christianity, including modes of discipline, instruction, and worship, may be rendered more

impressive and effectual. This field is almost untrodden; but, if we read aright the signs of the times, the day for exploring it draws nigh.

We have said, that, whilst we dissent from some of Milton's views on the subject of our present remarks, we agree in their spirit. It was evidently the aim of all his suggestions, to strip the clergy, as they are called, of that peculiar, artificial sanctity, with which superstition had long arrayed them, and which had made their simple, benignant office, one of the worst instruments of ambition and despotism. We believe, that this institution will never exert its true and full power on the church and on the world, until the childish awe, with which it has been viewed, shall be exchanged for enlightened esteem, and until men, instead of expecting from it certain mysterious, undefined influences, shall see in it a rational provision for promoting virtue and happiness, not by magic, but according to the fixed laws of human nature.

The remainder of the "Treatise on Christian Doctrine" furnishes topics on which we should willingly remark; but we have only time to glance at the opinions in which Milton differs from the majority. He rejects infant baptism, and argues against it with his usual earnestness and strength. He not only affirms, with many other Christians, that the fourth commandment, relating to the Sabbath, is abolished with the rest of the Mosaic system, but maintains, what few have done, that under the gospel no time is appointed for public worship, but that the observance of the first day of the week rests wholly on expediency, and on the agreement of Christians. He believes, that Christ is to appear visibly for the judgment of the world, and that

he will reign a thousand years on earth, at the end of which period Satan will assail the church with an innumerable confederacy, and be overwhelmed with everlasting ruin. He speaks of the judgment as beginning with Christ's second advent, and as comprehending his whole government through the millennium, as well as the closing scene, when sentence will be pronounced on evil angels, and on the whole human race. We have now given, we believe, all the peculiarities of Milton's faith. As for that large part of his work, in which he has accumulated scriptural proofs of doctrines and duties in which all Christians are agreed, its general tenor may be understood without farther remarks.

It may now be asked, What is the value of this book? We prize it chiefly as a testimony to Milton's profound reverence for the Christian religion, and an assertion of the freedom and rights of the mind. We are obliged to say, that the work throws little new light on the great subjects of which it treats. Some will say, that this ought not to surprise us; for new light is not to be looked for in the department of theology. But, if this be true, our religion may be charged with the want of adaptation to our nature in an essential point; for one of the most striking features of the human mind is its thirst for constantly enlarging knowledge, and its proneness to lose its interest in subjects which it has exhausted. The chief cause of Milton's failure was, that he sought truth too exclusively in the past, and among the dead. He indeed called no man master, and disclaimed the authority of Fathers, and was evidently dissatisfied with all the sects which had preceded or were spread around him. Still he believed in the perfection of the primitive church, and that Christiani-

ty, instead of being carried forward, was to be carried *back* to its original purity. To use his own striking language, "the lovely form of Truth," which Christians at first embraced, "had been hewn into a thousand pieces, like the mangled body of Osiris, and scattered to the four winds;" and consequently he believed, that the great duty of her friends was, "to gather up limb by limb, and bring together every joint and member." In conformity with this doctrine, he acted too much as an eclectic theologian, culling something from almost every sect, and endeavouring to form an harmonious system from materials "gathered from the four winds." He would have done better, had he sought truth less in other minds, and more in the communion of his own soul with Scripture, nature, God, and itself. The fact is, that the church, from its beginning, had been imperfect in knowledge and practice, and our business is, not to rest in the past, but to use it as a means of a purer and brighter futurity. Christianity began to be corrupted at its birth, to be debased by earthly mixtures, as soon as it touched the earth. The seeds of that corruption, which grew and shot up into the overshadowing despotism of Papal Rome, were sown in the age of the Apostles, as we learn in the Epistles; and we infer from the condition of the world, that nothing but a stupendous moral miracle, subverting all the laws of the human mind, could have prevented their developement. Who, that understands human nature, does not know, that old associations are not broken up in a moment; that, to minds plunged in a midnight of error, truth must gradually open like the dawning day; that old views will mingle with the new; that old ideas, which we wish to banish, will adhere to

the old words to which they were formerly attached; and that the sudden and entire eradication of long-rooted errors would be equivalent to the creation of a new intellect? How long did the Apostles, under Christ's immediate tuition, withstand his instructions! Even Peter, after the miraculous illumination of the day of Pentecost, remained ignorant, until the message from Cornelius, of that glorious feature of Christianity, the abolition of the Jewish peculiarity, and the equal participation of the Gentiles with the Jews in the blessings of the Messiah. As soon as Christianity was preached, it was blended with Judaism, which had power to neutralize the authority of Paul in many churches. In like manner, it soon began to be "spoiled" of its simplicity, "by philosophy and science falsely so called," and to be encumbered by Pagan ceremonies. The first Christians were indeed brought into "wonderful light," if their Christian state be compared with the darkness from which they had emerged; but not if compared with the perfection of knowledge to which Christ came to exalt the human race. The earliest Fathers, as we learn from their works, were not receptive of large communications of truth. Their writings abound in puerilities and marks of childish credulity, and betray that indistinctness of vision, which is experienced by men who issue from thick darkness into the light of day. In the ages of barbarism which followed the fall of the Roman empire, Christianity, though it answered wise purposes of Providence, was more and more disfigured and obscured. The Reformation was indeed a glorious era, but glorious for its reduction of Papal and clerical power, and for the partial liberation of the mind, rather than

for immediate improvements of men's apprehensions of Christianity. Some of the Reformers invented or brought back as injurious errors as those they overthrew. Luther's consubstantiation differed from the Pope's transubstantiation by a syllable, and that was all the gain; and we may safely say, that transubstantiation was a less monstrous doctrine than the five points of Calvin. How vain, therefore, was Milton's search for "the mangled Osiris," for "the lovely form and immortal features of Truth," in the history of the church!

Let us not be misunderstood, as if we would cut off the present age from the past. We mean not, that Milton should have neglected the labors of his predecessors. He believed justly, that all the periods and generations of the human family are bound together by a sublime connexion, and that the wisdom of each age is chiefly a derivation from all preceding ages, not excepting the most ancient, just as a noble stream, through its whole extent and in its widest overflowings, still holds communication with its infant springs, gushing out perhaps in the depths of distant forests, or on the heights of solitary mountains. We only mean to say, that the stream of religious knowledge is to swell and grow through its whole course, and to receive new contributions from gifted minds in successive generations. We only regret, that Milton did not draw more from the deep and full fountains of his own soul. We wish only to teach, that antiquity was the infancy of our race, and that its acquisitions, instead of being rested in, are to bear us onward to new heights of truth and virtue. We mean not to complain of Milton for not doing more. He rendered to mankind a far greater

service than that of a teacher of an improved theology He taught and exemplified that spirit of intellectual freedom, through which all the great conquests of truth are to be achieved, and by which the human mind is to attain to a new consciousness of its sublime faculties, and to invigorate and expand itself for ever.

We here close our remarks on Milton. In offering this tribute, we have aimed at something higher than to express and gratify our admiration of an eminent man. We believe, that an enlightened and exalted mind is a brighter manifestation of God than the outward universe; and we have set forth, as we have been able, the praises of an illustrious servant of the Most High, that, through him, glory may redound to the Father of all spirits, the Fountain of all wisdom and magnanimous virtue. And still more; we believe that the sublime intelligence of Milton was imparted, not for his own sake only, but to awaken kindred virtue and greatness in other souls. Far from regarding him as standing alone and unapproachable, we believe that he is an illustration of what all, who are true to their nature, will become in the progress of their being; and we have held him forth, not to excite an ineffectual admiration, but to stir up our own and others' breasts to an exhilarating pursuit of high and ever-growing attainments in intellect and virtue.

# REMARKS

## ON THE LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

# NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.

1827–28.

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The Life of Napoleon Bonaparte by Sir Walter Scott has been anticipated with an eagerness, proportioned to the unrivalled powers of the author, and to the wonderful endowments and fortunes of the hero. That the general expectation has been satisfied, we cannot affirm. But few will deny, that the writer has given us a monument of his great talents. The rapidity with which such a work has been thrown off astonishes us. We think, however, that the author owed to himself, and to the public, a more deliberate execution of this important undertaking. He should either have abandoned it, or have bestowed on it the long and patient labor which it required. The marks of negligence and haste, which are spread through the work, are serious blemishes, and, to more fastidious readers, inexpiable defects. It wants compression and selection throughout. Many passages are encumbered with verbiage. Many thoughts are weakened by useless

expansion and worse than useless repetition. Comparisons are accumulated to excess, and, whilst many are exquisite, perhaps as many are trite and unworthy of history. The remarks are generally just, but obvious. We state these defects plainly, that we may express the more freely our admiration of the talents, which have executed so rapidly a work so extensive and various, so rich in information, so fresh and vivid in description, and furnishing such abundant specimens of a free, graceful, and vigorous style.

The work has the great merit of impartiality. It is probably inaccurate in many of its details, but singularly free from prejudice and passion. Not a few, who considered that the author was both a Briton and a friend of the principles and policy of Pitt, were expecting from his pen a discolored delineation of the implacable foe of England and of that great minister. But the rectitude of his mind, and his reverence for historical truth, have effectually preserved him from abusing the great power, conferred on him by his talents, over public opinion. We think, that his laudable fear of wronging the enemy of his country, joined to an admiration of the dazzling qualities of Napoleon, has led him to soften unduly the crimes of his hero, and to give more favorable impressions than truth will warrant.

But enough of the author, who needs not our praise, and can suffer little by our censure. Our concern is with his subject. A just estimate of the late Emperor of France seems to us important. That extraordinary man, having operated on the world with unprecedented power during his life, is now influencing it by his character. That character, we apprehend, is not

viewed as it should be. The kind of admiration which it inspires, even in free countries, is a bad omen. The greatest crime against society, that of spoiling it of its rights and loading it with chains, still fails to move that deep abhorrence, which is its due; and which, if really felt, would fix on the usurper a brand of indelible infamy. Regarding freedom as the chief interest of human nature, as essential to its intellectual, moral, and religious progress, we look on men, who have signalized themselves by their hostility to it, with an indignation at once stern and sorrowful, which no glare of successful war, and no admiration of the crowd, can induce us to suppress. We mean then to speak freely of Napoleon. But, if we know ourselves, we could on no account utter one unjust reproach. We speak the more freely, because conscious of exemption from every feeling like animosity. We war not with the dead. We would resist only what we deem the pernicious influence of the dead. We would devote ourselves to the cause of freedom and humanity, a cause perpetually betrayed by the admiration lavished on prosperous crime and all-grasping ambition. Our great topic will be the Character of Napoleon; and with this we shall naturally intersperse reflections on the great interests which he perpetually influenced.

We begin with observing, that it is an act of justice to Bonaparte to remember, that he grew up under disastrous influences, in a troubled day, when men's minds were convulsed, old institutions overthrown, old opinions shaken, old restraints snapped asunder; when the authority of religion was spurned, and youth abandoned to unwonted license; when the imagination was made feverish by visions of indistinct good, and the

passions swelled, by the sympathy of millions, to a resistless torrent. A more dangerous school for the character cannot well be conceived. That all-seeing Being, who knows the trials of his creatures and the secrets of the heart, can alone judge to what degree crimes are extenuated by circumstances so inauspicious. This we must remember in reviewing the history of men, who were exposed to trials unknown to ourselves. But, because the turpitude of an evil agent is diminished by infelicities of education or condition, we must not therefore confound the immutable distinctions of right and wrong, and withhold our reprobation from atrocities which have spread misery and slavery far and wide.

It is also due to Napoleon to observe, that there has always existed, and still exists, a mournful obtuseness of moral feeling in regard to the crimes of military and political life. The wrong-doing of public men on a large scale has never drawn upon them that sincere, hearty abhorrence, which visits private vice. Nations have seemed to court aggression and bondage, by their stupid, insane admiration of successful tyrants. The wrongs, from which men have suffered most, in body and mind, are yet unpunished. True; Christianity has put into our lips censures on the aspiring and the usurping. But these reproaches are as yet little more than sounds, and unmeaning commonplaces. They are repeated for form's sake. When we read or hear them, we feel that they want depth and strength. They are not inward, solemn, burning convictions, breaking from the indignant soul with a tone of reality, before which guilt would cower. The true moral feeling in regard to the crimes of public men is almost to be created.

We believe, then, that such a character as Bonaparte's is formed with very little consciousness of its turpitude; and society, which contributes so much to its growth, is responsible for its existence, and merits in part the misery which it spreads.

Of the early influences, under which Bonaparte was formed, we know little. He was educated in a military school, and this, we apprehend, is not an institution to form much delicacy, or independence of moral feeling; for the young soldier is taught, as his first duty, to obey his superior without consulting his conscience; to take human life at another's bidding; to perform that deed, which above all others requires deliberate conviction, without a moment's inquiry as to its justice; and to place himself a passive instrument in hands, which, as all history teaches, often reek with blood causelessly shed.

His first political association was with the Jacobins, the most sanguinary of all the factions which raged in France, and whose sway is emphatically called "the reign of terror." The service, which secured his command in Italy, was the turning of his artillery on the people, who, however dangerous when acting as a mob, happened in the present case to understand their rights, and were directing their violence against manifest usurpation.

His first campaign was in Italy, and we have still a vivid recollection of the almost rapturous admiration, with which we followed his first triumphs; for then we were simple enough to regard him as the chosen guardian of liberty. His peculiar tactics were not then understood; the secret of his success had not reached us

and his rapid victories stimulated the imagination to invest him with the mysterious powers of a hero of romance. We confess, that we cannot now read the history of his Italian wars without a quickened movement in the veins. The rapidity of his conceptions; the inexhaustibleness of his invention; the energy of his will; the decision which suffered not a moment's pause between the purpose and its execution; the presence of mind, which, amidst sudden reverses and on the brink of ruin, devised the means of safety and success; these commanding attributes, added to a courage, which, however suspected afterwards, never faltered then, compel us to bestow, what indeed we have no desire to withhold, the admiration which is due to superior power.

Let not the friends of peace be offended. We have said, and we repeat it, that we have no desire to withhold our admiration from the energies, which war often awakens. Great powers, even in their perversion, attest a glorious nature, and we may feel their grandeur, whilst we condemn, with our whole strength of moral feeling, the evil passions by which they are depraved. We are willing to grant that war, abhor it as we may, often developes, and places in strong light, a force of intellect and purpose, which raises our conceptions of the human soul. There is perhaps no moment in life, in which the mind is brought into such intense action, in which the will is so strenuous, and in which irrepressible excitement is so tempered with self-possession, as in the hour of battle. Still the greatness of the warrior is poor and low compared with the magnanimity of virtue. It vanishes before the greatness of principle. The martyr to humanity, to freedom, or religion; the

unshrinking adherent of despised and deserted truth, who, alone, unsupported, and scorned, with no crowd to infuse into him courage, no variety of objects to draw his thoughts from himself, no opportunity of effort or resistance to rouse and nourish energy, still yields himself calmly, resolutely, with invincible philanthropy, to bear prolonged and exquisite suffering, which one retracting word might remove,—such a man is as superior to the warrior, as the tranquil and boundless heavens above us, to the low earth we tread beneath our feet.

We have spoken of the energies of mind called forth by war. If we may be allowed a short digression, which however bears directly on our main subject, the merits of Napoleon, we would observe, that military talent, even of the highest order, is far from holding the first place among intellectual endowments. It is one of the lower forms of genius; for it is not conversant with the highest and richest objects of thought. We grant that a mind, which takes in a wide country at a glance, and understands, almost by intuition, the positions it affords for a successful campaign, is a comprehensive and vigorous one. The general, who disposes his forces so as to counteract a greater force; who supplies by skill, science, and invention, the want of numbers; who dives into the counsels of his enemy, and who gives unity, energy, and success to a vast variety of operations, in the midst of casualties and obstructions which no wisdom could foresee, manifests great power. But still the chief work of a general is to apply physical force; to remove physical obstructions; to avail himself of physical aids and advantages; to act on matter; to overcome rivers, ramparts, moun-

tains, and human muscles; and these are not the highest objects of mind, nor do they demand intelligence of the highest order; and accordingly nothing is more common than to find men, eminent in this department, who are wanting in the noblest energies of the soul; in habits of profound and liberal thinking, in imagination and taste, in the capacity of enjoying works of genius, and in large and original views of human nature and society. The office of a great general does not differ widely from that of a great mechanician, whose business it is to frame new combinations of physical forces, to adapt them to new circumstances, and to remove new obstructions. Accordingly great generals, away from the camp, are often no greater men than the mechanician taken from his workshop. In conversation they are often dull. Deep and refined reasonings they cannot comprehend. We know that there are splendid exceptions. Such was Cesar, at once the greatest soldier and the most sagacious statesman of his age, whilst, in eloquence and literature, he left behind him almost all, who had devoted themselves exclusively to these pursuits. But such cases are rare. The conqueror of Napoleon, the hero of Waterloo, possesses undoubtedly great military talents; but we do not understand, that his most partial admirers claim for him a place in the highest class of minds. We will not go down for illustration to such men as Nelson, a man great on the deck, but debased by gross vices, and who never pretended to enlargement of intellect. To institute a comparison in point of talent and genius between such men and Milton, Bacon, and Shakspeare, is almost an insult on these illustrious names. Who can think of these truly

great intelligences; of the range of their minds through heaven and earth; of their deep intuition into the soul; of their new and glowing combinations of thought; of the energy with which they grasped, and subjected to their main purpose, the infinite materials of illustration which nature and life afford, — who can think of the forms of transcendent beauty and grandeur which they created, or which were rather emanations of their own minds; of the calm wisdom and fervid imagination which they conjoined; of the voice of power, in which "though dead, they still speak," and awaken intellect, sensibility, and genius in both hemispheres, — who can think of such men, and not feel the immense inferiority of the most gifted warrior, whose elements of thought are physical forces and physical obstructions, and whose employment is the combination of the lowest class of objects, on which a powerful mind can be employed.

We return to Napoleon. His splendid victories in Italy spread his name like lightning through the civilized world. Unhappily they emboldened him to those unprincipled and open aggressions, to the indulgence of that lawless, imperious spirit, which marked his future course, and kept pace with his growing power. In his victorious career, he soon came in contact with states, some of which, as Tuscany and Venice, had acknowledged the French Republic, whilst others, as Parma and Modena, had observed a strict neutrality. The old-fashioned laws of nations, under which such states would have found shelter, seemed never to have crossed the mind of the young victor. Not satisfied with violating the neutrality of all, he seized the port of Leghorn, and ruined the once flourishing commerce

of Tuscany; and, having exacted heavy tribute from Parma and Modena, he compelled these powers to surrender, what had hitherto been held sacred in the utmost extremities of war, some of their choicest pictures, the chief ornaments of their capitals. We are sometimes told of the good done by Napoleon to Italy. But we have heard his name pronounced as indignantly there as here. An Italian cannot forgive him for robbing that country of its noblest works of art, its dearest treasures and glories, which had made it a land of pilgrimage to men of taste and genius from the whole civilized world, and which had upheld and solaced its pride under conquest and humiliation. From this use of power in the very dawn of his fortunes, it might easily have been foretold, what part he would act in the stormy day which was approaching, when the sceptre of France and Europe was to be offered to any strong hand, which should be daring enough to grasp it.

Next to Italy, Egypt became the stage for the display of Napoleon; Egypt, a province of the Grand Signior, with whom France was in profound peace, and who, according to the long established relations of Europe, was her natural ally. It would seem that this expedition was Bonaparte's own project. His motives are not very distinctly stated by his biographer. We doubt not that his great aim was conspicuousness. He chose a theatre where all eyes could be turned upon him. He saw that the time for usurpation had not yet come in France. To use his own language, "the fruit was not yet ripe." He wanted a field of action which would draw upon him the gaze of the world, and from which he might return at the favorable moment for the

prosecution of his enterprises at home. At the same time he undoubtedly admitted into his mind, which success had already intoxicated, some vague, wild hope of making an impression on the Eastern world, which might place its destinies at his command, and give him a throne more enviable than Europe could bestow. His course in the East exhibited the same lawlessness, the same contempt of all restraints on his power, which we have already noted. No means, which promised success, were thought the worse for their guilt. It was not enough for him to boast of his triumphs over the cross, or to profess Mahometanism. He claimed inspiration, and a commission from God, and was anxious to join the character of prophet to that of hero. This was the beginning of the great weaknesses and errors into which he was betrayed by that spirit of self-exaggeration, which, under the influence of past success and of unbounded flattery, was already growing into a kind of insanity. In his own view he was fit to be a compeer with Mahomet. His greatness in his own eyes made him blind to the folly of urging his supernatural claims on the Turk, who contemned, even more than he abhorred, a Frank; and who would sooner have sold himself a slave to Christians, than have acknowledged a renegade Christian as a sharer of the glories of Mahomet. It was not enough for Bonaparte, on this expedition, to insult God, to show an impiety as foolish as it was daring. He proceeded to trample on the sentiments and dictates of humanity with equal hardihood. The massacre of Jaffa is universally known. Twelve hundred prisoners, and probably more, who had surrendered themselves to Napoleon, and were apparently admitted to quarter, were two days afterwards

marched out of the fort, divided into small bodies, and then deliberately shot, and, in case the musket was not effectual, were despatched by bayonets. This was an outrage, which cannot be sheltered by the laws and usages of war, barbarous as they are. It was the deed of a bandit and savage, and ought to be execrated by good men, who value and would preserve the mitigations which Christianity has infused into the conduct of national hostilities.

The next great event in Bonaparte's history was the usurpation of the supreme power of the state, and the establishment of military despotism over France. On the particulars of this criminal act we have no desire to enlarge, nor are we anxious to ascertain, whether our hero, on this occasion, lost his courage and self-possession, as he is reported to have done. We are more anxious to express our convictions of the turpitude of this outrage on liberty and justice. For this crime but one apology can be offered. Napoleon, it is said, seized the reins, when, had he let them slip, they would have fallen into other hands. He enslaved France at a moment, when, had he spared her, she would have found another tyrant. Admitting the truth of the plea, what is it but the reasoning of the highwayman, who robs and murders the traveller, because the booty was about to be seized by another hand, or because another dagger was ready to do the bloody deed? We are aware that the indignation, with which we regard this crime of Napoleon, will find a response in few breasts; for to the multitude a throne is a temptation which no virtue can be expected to withstand. But moral truth is immovable amidst the sophistry, ridicule, and abject reasonings of men, and the time

will come, when it will find a meet voice to give it utterance. Of all crimes against society, usurpation is the blackest. He who lifts a parricidal hand against his country's rights and freedom; who plants his foot on the necks of thirty millions of his fellow-creatures; who concentrates in his single hand the powers of a mighty empire; and who wields its powers, squanders its treasures, and pours forth its blood like water, to make other nations slaves and the world his prey, — this man, as he unites all crimes in his sanguinary career, so he should be set apart by the human race for their unmingled and unmeasured abhorrence, and should bear on his guilty head a mark as opprobrious as that which the first murderer wore. We cannot think with patience of one man fastening chains on a whole people, and subjecting millions to his single will; of whole regions overshadowed by the tyranny of a frail being like ourselves. In anguish of spirit we exclaim, How long will an abject world kiss the foot which tramples it? How long shall crime find shelter in its very aggravations and excess?

Perhaps it may be said, that our indignation seems to light on Napoleon, not so much because he was a despot, as because he became a despot by usurpation; that we seem not to hate tyranny itself, so much as a particular mode of gaining it. We do indeed regard usurpation as a crime of peculiar blackness, especially when committed, as in the case of Napoleon, in the name of liberty. All despotism, however, whether usurped or hereditary, is our abhorrence. We regard it as the most grievous wrong and insult to the human race. But towards the hereditary despot we have more of compassion than indignation. Nursed and

brought up in delusion, worshipped from his cradle, never spoken to in the tone of fearless truth, taught to look on the great mass of his fellow-beings as an inferior race, and to regard despotism as a law of nature and a necessary element of social life; such a prince, whose education and condition almost deny him the possibility of acquiring healthy moral feeling and manly virtue, must not be judged severely. Still, in absolving the despot from much of the guilt which seems at first to attach to his unlawful and abused power, we do not the less account despotism a wrong and a curse. The time for its fall, we trust, is coming. It cannot fall too soon. It has long enough wrung from the laborer his hard earnings; long enough squandered a nation's wealth on its parasites and minions; long enough warred against the freedom of the mind, and arrested the progress of truth. It has filled dungeons enough with the brave and good, and shed enough of the blood of patriots. Let its end come. It cannot come too soon.

We have now followed Bonaparte to the moment of possessing himself of the supreme power. Those who were associated with him in subverting the government of the Directory, essayed to lay restraints on the First Consul, who was to take their place. But he indignantly repelled them. He held the sword, and, with this, not only intimidated the selfish, but awed and silenced the patriotic, who saw too plainly, that it could only be wrested from him by renewing the horrors of the Revolution. — We now proceed to consider some of the means, by which he consolidated his power, and raised it into the imperial dignity. We consider these as much more important illustrations of his character

than his successive campaigns, to which accordingly we shall give little attention.

One of his first measures for giving stability to his power was certainly a wise one, and was obviously dictated by his situation and character. Having seized the first dignity in the state by military force, and leaning on a devoted soldiery, he was under no necessity of binding himself to any of the parties which had distracted the country, a vassalage to which his domineering spirit could ill have stooped. Policy and his love of mastery pointed out to him an indiscriminate employment of the leading men of all parties; and not a few of these had become so selfish and desperate in the disastrous progress of the Revolution, that they were ready to break up old connexions, and to divide the spoils of the Republic with a master. Accordingly he adopted a system of comprehension and lenity, from which even the emigrants were not excluded, and had the satisfaction of seeing almost the whole talent, which the Revolution had quickened, leagued in the execution of his plans. Under the able men, whom he called to his aid, the finances and the war department, which had fallen into a confusion that threatened ruin to the State, were soon restored to order, and means and forces provided for retrieving the recent defeats and disgraces of the French armies.

This leads us to mention another and most important and effectual means by which Napoleon secured and enlarged his power. We refer to the brilliant campaign immediately following his elevation to the Consulate, and which restored to France the ascendency which she had lost during his absence. On his success at this juncture his future fortunes wholly de-

pended. It was in this campaign that he proved himself the worthy rival of Hannibal. The energy which conducted an army, with its cavalry, artillery, and supplies, across the Alps, by untried paths, which only the chamois hunter, horn and bred amidst glaciers and everlasting snows, had trodden, gave the impression, which of all others he most desired to spread, of his superiority to nature, as well as to human opposition. This enterprise was in one view a fearful omen to Europe. It showed a power over the minds of his soldiers, the effects of which were not to be calculated. The conquest of St. Bernard by a French army was the boast of the nation; but a still more wonderful thing was, the capacity of the general to inspire into that army the intense force, confidence, resolution, and patience, by which alone the work could be accomplished. The victory of Marengo, gained by one of the accidents of war in the moment of apparent defeat and ruin, secured to Bonaparte the dominion which he coveted. France, who, in her madness and folly, had placed her happiness in conquest, now felt that the glory of her arms was safe only in the hands of the First Consul; whilst the soldiery, who held the sceptre in their gift, became more thoroughly satisfied, that triumph and spoils waited on his standard.

Another important and essential means of securing and building up his power, was the system of *espionage*, called the Police, which, under the Directory, had received a developement worthy of those friends of freedom, but which was destined to be perfected by the wisdom of Napoleon. It would seem as if despotism, profiting by the experience of ages, had put forth her whole skill and resources in forming the French po-

lice, and had framed an engine, never to be surpassed, for stifling the faintest breathings of disaffection, and chaining every free thought. This system of *espionage*, (we are proud that we have no English word for the infernal machine,) had indeed been used under all tyrannies. But it wanted the craft of Fouché, and the energy of Bonaparte, to disclose all its powers. In the language of our author, "it spread through all the ramifications of society;" that is, every man, of the least importance in the community, had the eye of a spy upon him. He was watched at home as well as abroad, in the *boudoir* and theatre, in the brothel and gaming-house; and these last-named haunts furnished not a few ministers of the Argus-eyed Police. There was an ear open through all France to catch the whispers of discontent; a power of evil, which aimed to rival, in omnipresence and invisibleness, the benignant agency of the Deity. Of all instruments of tyranny, this is the most detestable. It chills social intercourse; locks up the heart; infects and darkens men's minds with mutual jealousies and fears; and reduces to system a wary dissimulation, subversive of force and manliness of character. We find, however, some consolation in learning that tyrants are the prey of distrust, as well as the people over whom they set this cruel guard; that tyrants cannot confide in their own spies, but must keep watch over the machinery which we have described, lest it recoil upon themselves. Bonaparte at the head of an army is a dazzling spectacle; but Bonaparte, heading a horde of spies, compelled to doubt and fear these base instruments of his power, compelled to divide them into bands, and to receive daily reports from each, so that, by balancing them against each other and sifting

their testimony, he might gather the truth; Bonaparte, thus employed, is any thing but imposing. It requires no great elevation of thought to look down on such an occupation with scorn; and we see, in the anxiety and degradation which it involves, the beginning of that retribution which tyranny cannot escape.

Another means by which the First Consul protected his power can excite no wonder. That he should fetter the press, should banish or imprison refractory editors, should subject the journals and more important works of literature to jealous superintendence, these were things of course. Free writing and despotism are such implacable foes, that we hardly think of blaming a tyrant for keeping no terms with the press. He cannot do it. He might as reasonably choose a volcano for the foundation of his throne. Necessity is laid upon him, unless he is in love with ruin, to check the bold and honest expression of thought. But the necessity is his own choice; and let infamy be that man's portion, who seizes a power which he cannot sustain, but by dooming the mind through a vast empire to slavery, and by turning the press, that great organ of truth, into an instrument of public delusion and debasement.

We pass to another means of removing obstructions to his power and ambition, still worse than the last. We refer to the terror which he spread by his severities, just before assuming the imperial power. The murder of the Duke d'Enghien was justified by Napoleon as a method of striking fear into the Bourbons, who, as he said, were plotting his death. This may have been one motive; for we have reason to think that he was about that time threatened with assassination. But we believe still more, that he intended to awe into acqui-

escence the opposition, which, he knew, would be awakened in many breasts, by the prostration of the forms of the republic, and the open assumption of the imperial dignity. There were times when Bonaparte disclaimed the origination of the murder of the Duke d'Enghien. But no other could have originated it. It bears internal marks of its author. The boldness, decision, and overpowering rapidity of the crime, point unerringly to the soul where it was conceived. We believe that one great recommendation of this murder was, that it would strike amazement and terror into France and Europe, and show that he was prepared to shed any blood, and to sweep before him every obstruction, in his way to absolute power. Certain it is, that the open murder of the Duke d'Enghien, and the justly suspected assassinations of Pichegru and Wright, did create a dread, such as had not been felt before ; and, whilst on previous occasions some faint breathings of liberty were to be heard in the legislative bodies, only one voice, that of Carnot, was raised against investing Bonaparte with the imperial crown, and laying France, an unprotected victim, at his feet.

There remain for our consideration other means employed by Bonaparte for building up and establishing his power, of a different character from those we have named, and which on this account we cannot pass without notice. One of these was the Concordat which he extorted from the Pope, and which professed to reëstablish the Catholic religion in France. Our religious prejudices have no influence on our judgment of this measure. We make no objections to it, as the restoration of a worship which on many accounts we condemn. We view it now simply as an instrument of

policy, and, in this light, it seems to us no proof of the sagacity of Bonaparte. It helps to confirm in us an impression, which other parts of his history give us, that he did not understand the peculiar character of his age, and the peculiar and original policy which it demanded. He always used commonplace means of power, although the unprecedented times in which he lived, required a system, which should combine untried resources, and touch new springs of action. Because old governments had found a convenient prop in religion, Napoleon imagined that it was a necessary appendage and support of his sway, and resolved to restore it. But at this moment there were no foundations in France for a religious establishment, which could give strength and a character of sacredness to the supreme power. There was comparatively no faith, no devout feeling, and still more, no superstition to supply the place of these. The time for the reaction of the religious principle had not yet arrived; and a more likely means of retarding it could hardly have been devised, than the nursing care extended to the church by Bonaparte, the recent Mussulman, the known despiser of the ancient faith, who had no worship at heart but the worship of himself. Instead of bringing religion to the aid of the state, it was impossible that such a man should touch it, without loosening the faint hold which it yet retained on the people. There were none so ignorant as to be the dupes of the First Consul in this particular. Every man, woman, and child knew that he was playing the part of a juggler. Not one religious association could be formed with his character or government. It was a striking proof of the self-exaggerating vanity of Bonaparte, and of his ignorance of the

higher principles of human nature, that he not only hoped to revive and turn to his account the old religion, but imagined, that he could, if necessary, have created a new one. "Had the Pope never existed before, he should have been made for the occasion," was the speech of this political charlatan; as if religious opinion and feeling were things to be manufactured by a consular decree. Ancient legislators, by adopting and sympathizing with popular and rooted superstitions, were able to press them into the service of their institutions. They were wise enough to build on a pre-existing faith, and studiously to conform to it. Bonaparte, in a country of infidelity and atheism, and whilst unable to refrain from sarcasms on the system which he patronized, was weak enough to believe that he might make it a substantial support of his government. He undoubtedly congratulated himself on the terms, which he exacted from the Pope, and which had never been conceded to the most powerful monarchs; forgetting that his apparent success was the defeat of his plans; for, just as far as he severed the church from the supreme pontiff, and placed himself conspicuously at its head, he destroyed the only connexion which could give it influence. Just so far its power over opinion and conscience ceased. It became a coarse instrument of state, contemned by the people, and serving only to demonstrate the aspiring views of its master. Accordingly the French bishops in general refused to hold their dignities under this new head, preferred exile to the sacrifice of the rights of the church, and left behind them a hearty abhorrence of the Concordat among the more zealous members of their communion. Happy would it have been for Napoleon, had he left

the Pope and the church to themselves. By occasionally recognising and employing, and then insulting and degrading, the Roman pontiff, he exasperated a large part of Christendom, fastened on himself the brand of impiety, and awakened a religious hatred which contributed its full measure to his fall.

As another means employed by Bonaparte for giving strength and honor to his government, we may name the grandeur of his public works, which he began in his consulate and continued after his accession to the imperial dignity. These dazzled France, and still impress travellers with admiration. Could we separate these from his history, and did no other indication of his character survive, we should undoubtedly honor him with the title of a beneficent sovereign; but, connected as they are, they do little or nothing to change our conceptions of him as an all-grasping, unprincipled usurper. Paris was the chief object of these labors; and surely we cannot wonder, that he who aimed at universal dominion, should strive to improve and adorn the metropolis of his empire. It is the practice of despots to be lavish of expense on the royal residence and the seat of government. Travellers in France, as in other countries of the continent, are struck and pained by the contrast between the magnificent capital and the mud-walled village and uninteresting province. Bonaparte had a special motive for decorating Paris, for "Paris is France," as has often been observed; and, in conciliating the vanity of the great city, he secured the obedience of the whole country. The boasted internal improvements of Napoleon scarcely deserve to be named, if we compare their influence with the operation of his public measures. The con-

scription, which drew from agriculture its most effective laborers, and his continental system, which sealed up every port and annihilated the commerce of his empire, drained and exhausted France to a degree, for which his artificial stimulants of industry, and his splendid projects, afforded no compensation. Perhaps the most admired of all his public works is the road over the Simplon, to which all travellers concur in giving the epithet, stupendous. But it ought not to amaze us, that he, who was aspiring at unlimited dominion, should establish communications between the different provinces of his empire. It ought not to amaze us, that he, who had scaled the glaciers of St. Bernard, should covet some easier passage for pouring his troops into Italy; nor is it very wonderful, that a sovereign, who commanded the revenues of Europe, and who lived in an age when civil engineering had been advanced to a perfection before unknown, should accomplish a bolder enterprise than his predecessors. We would add, that Napoleon must divide with Fabbroni the glory of the road over the Simplon; for the genius, which contrived and constructed, is more properly its author, than the will which commanded it.

There is however one great work, which gives Bonaparte a fair claim on the gratitude of posterity and entitles him to an honorable renown. We refer to the new code of laws, which was given to France under his auspices. His participation in this work has indeed been unwarrantably and ridiculously magnified. Because he attended the meetings of the commissioners to whom it was assigned, and made some useful and sagacious suggestions, he has been praised, as if he had struck out, by the miraculous force of his genius,

a new code of laws. The truth is, that he employed for this work, as he should have done, the most eminent civilians of the empire; and it is also true, that these learned men have little claim to originality; for, as our author observes, the code "has few peculiarities making a difference between its principles and those of the Roman law." In other words, they preferred wisdom to novelty. Still Bonaparte deserves great praise for his interest in the work, for the impulse he gave to those to whom it was committed, and for the time and thought, which, amidst the cares of a vast empire, he bestowed upon it. That his ambition incited him to this labor, we doubt not. He meant to entwine the laurels of Justinian with those of Alexander. But we will not quarrel with ambition, when it is wise enough to devote itself to the happiness of mankind. In the present case, he showed that he understood something of true glory; and we prize the instance more, because it stands almost alone in his history. We look on the conqueror, the usurper, the spoiler of kingdoms, the insatiable despot, with disgust, and see in all these characters an essential vulgarness of mind. But, when we regard him as a Fountain of Justice to a vast empire, we recognise in him a resemblance to the just and benignant Deity, and cheerfully accord to him the praise of bestowing on a nation one of the greatest gifts, which it is permitted to man to confer. It was however the misery of Bonaparte, a curse brought on him by his crimes, that he could touch nothing without leaving on it the polluting mark of despotism. His usurpation took from him the power of legislating with magnanimity, where his own interest was concerned. He could provide for the administra-

tion of justice between man and man, but not between the citizen and the ruler. Political offences, the very class which ought to be submitted to a jury, were denied that mode of trial. Juries might decide on other criminal questions; but they were not to be permitted to interpose between the despot and the ill-fated subjects, who might fall under his suspicion. These were arraigned before "special tribunals, invested with a half military character," the ready ministers of nefarious prosecutions, and only intended to cloak by legal forms the murderous purpose of the tyrant.

We have thus considered some of the means by which Bonaparte consolidated and extended his power. We now see him advanced to that imperial throne, on which he had long fixed his eager eye. We see France alternately awed and dazzled by the influences we have described, and at last surrendering, by public, deliberate acts, without a struggle or a show of opposition, her rights, liberties, interests, and power to an absolute master and to his posterity for ever. Thus perished the name and forms of the Republic. Thus perished the hopes of philanthropy. The air, which a few years ago resounded with the shouts of a great people casting away their chains, and claiming their birthright of freedom, now rung with the servile cries of long life to a blood-stained usurper. There were indeed generous spirits, true patriots, like our own La Fayette, still left in France. But, few and scattered, they were left to shed in secret the tears of sorrowful and indignant despair. By this base and disastrous issue of their revolution, the French nation not only renounced their own rights, but brought reproach on

the cause of freedom, which years cannot wash away. This is to us a more painful recollection, than all the desolations which France spread through Europe, and than her own bitter sufferings, when the hour of retribution came upon her. The fields which she laid waste are again waving with harvest; and the groans which broke forth through her cities and villages, when her bravest sons perished by thousands and ten thousands on the snows of Russia, have died away, and her wasted population is renewed. But the wounds which she inflicted on freedom by the crimes perpetrated in that sacred name, and by the abject spirit with which that sacred cause was deserted, are still fresh and bleeding. France not only subjected herself to a tyrant, but what is worse, she has given tyranny everywhere new pleas and arguments, and emboldened it to preach openly, in the face of heaven, the impious doctrines of absolute power and unconditional submission.

Napoleon was now Emperor of France; and a man unacquainted with human nature would think, that such an empire, whose bounds now extended to the Rhine, might have satisfied even an ambitious man. But Bonaparte obeyed that law of progress, to which the highest minds are peculiarly subjected; and acquisition inflamed, instead of appeasing, the spirit of dominion. He had long proposed to himself the conquest of Europe, of the world; and the title of Emperor added intenseness to this purpose. Did we not fear, that by repetition we might impair the conviction which we are most anxious to impress, we would enlarge on the enormity of the guilt involved in the project of universal empire. Napoleon knew distinctly the price, which he must pay for the eminence which he coveted.

He knew that the path to it lay over wounded and slaughtered millions, over putrefying heaps of his fellow-creatures, over ravaged fields, smoking ruins, pillaged cities. He knew that his steps would be followed by the groans of widowed mothers and famished orphans; of bereaved friendship and despairing love; and that, in addition to this amount of misery, he would create an equal amount of crime, by multiplying indefinitely the instruments and participators of his rapine and fraud. He knew the price, and resolved to pay it. But we do not insist on a topic, which few, very few as yet, understand or feel. Turning then for the present from the moral aspect of this enterprise, we will view it in another light, which is of great importance to a just estimate of his claims on admiration. We will inquire into the nature and fitness of the measures and policy which he adopted, for compassing the subjugation of Europe and the world.

We are aware, that this discussion may expose us to the charge of great presumption. It may be said that men, having no access to the secrets of cabinets, and no participation in public affairs, are not the best judges of the policy of such a man as Napoleon. This we are not anxious to disprove. We do not deny the disadvantages of our position, nor shall we quarrel with our readers for questioning the soundness of our opinions. But we will say, that though distant, we have not been indifferent observers of the great events of our age, and that, though conscious of exposure to many errors, we have a strong persuasion of the substantial correctness of our views. We express then, without reserve, our belief, that the policy of Napoleon was wanting in sagacity, and that he proved himself incapable, as we

before suggested, of understanding the character and answering the demands of his age. His system was a repetition of old means, when the state of the world was new. The sword and the police, which had sufficed him for enslaving France, were not the only powers required for his designs against the human race. Other resources were to be discovered or created; and the genius for calling them forth did not, we conceive, belong to Napoleon.

The circumstances, under which Napoleon aspired to universal empire, differed in many respects from those, under which former conquerors were placed. It was easy for Rome, when she had subdued kingdoms, to reduce them to provinces and to govern them by force; for nations at that period were bound together by no tie. They had little communication with each other. Differences of origin, of religion, of manners, of language, of modes of warfare; differences aggravated by long and ferocious wars, and by the general want of civilization, prevented joint action, and almost all concern for one another's fate. Modern Europe, on the other hand, was an assemblage of civilized states, closely connected by commerce, by literature, by a common faith, by interchange of thoughts and improvements, and by a policy which had for ages proposed, as its chief object, the establishment of such a balance of power as would secure national independence. Under these influences the human mind had made great progress; and in truth the French revolution had resulted from an unprecedented excitement and developement of men's faculties, and from the extension of power and intelligence through a vastly wider class, than had participated in them at any former period. The very

power, which Napoleon was wielding, might be traced to an enthusiasm essentially generous, and manifesting a tendency of the civilized world to better institutions. It is plain, that the old plans of conquest, and the maxims of comparatively barbarous ages, did not suit such a state of society. An ambitious man was to make his way, by allying himself with the new movements and excitements of the world. The existence of a vast maritime power like England, which, by its command of the ocean and its extensive commerce, was brought into contact with every community, and which at the same time enjoyed the enviable preëminence of possessing the freest institutions in Europe, was of itself a sufficient motive for a great modification of the policy, by which one state was now to be placed at the head of the nations. The peculiar character and influence of England, Bonaparte seemed indeed never able to comprehend; and the violent measures, by which he essayed to tear asunder the old connexions of that country with the continent, only gave them strength, by adding to the ties of interest those of sympathy, of common suffering, and common danger.

Force and corruption were the great engines of Napoleon, and he plied them without disguise or reserve, not caring how far he insulted, and armed against himself, the moral and national feelings of Europe. His great reliance was on the military spirit and energy of the French people. To make France a nation of soldiers was the first and main instrument of his policy; and here he was successful. The revolution indeed had in no small degree done this work to his hands. To complete it, he introduced a national system of education, having for its plain end to train the whole

youth of France to a military life, to familiarize the mind to this destination from its earliest years, and to associate the idea of glory almost exclusively with arms. The conscription gave full efficacy to this system; for, as every young man in the empire had reason to anticipate a summons to the army, the first object in education naturally was, to fit him for the field. The public honors bestowed on military talent, and a rigorous impartiality in awarding promotion to merit, so that no origin, however obscure, was a bar to what were deemed the highest honors of Europe, kindled the ambition of the whole people into a flame, and directed it exclusively to the camp. It is true, the conscription, which thinned so terribly the ranks of her youth, and spread anxiety and bereavement through all her dwellings, was severely felt in France. But Napoleon knew the race whom it was his business to manage; and by the glare of victory, and the title of the Grand Empire, he succeeded in reconciling them for a time to the most painful domestic privations, and to an unexampled waste of life. Thus he secured, what he accounted the most important instrument of dominion, a great military force. But, on the other hand, the stimulants, which, for this purpose, he was forced to apply perpetually to French vanity, the ostentation with which the invincible power of France was trumpeted to the world, and the haughty, vaunting style which became the most striking characteristic of that intoxicated people, were perpetual irritations of the national spirit and pride of Europe, and implanted a deep hatred towards the new and insulting empire, which waited but for a favorable moment to repay with interest the debt of humiliation.

The condition of Europe forbade, as we believe, the establishment of universal monarchy by mere physical force. The sword, however important, was now to play but a secondary part. The true course for Napoleon seems to us to have been indicated, not only by the state of Europe, but by the means which France in the beginning of her revolution had found most effectual. He should have identified himself with some great interests, opinion, or institutions, by which he might have bound to himself a large party in every nation. He should have contrived to make at least a specious cause against all old establishments. To contrast himself most strikingly and most advantageously with former governments, should have been the key of his policy. He should have placed himself at the head of a new order of things, which should have worn the face of an improvement of the social state. Nor did the subversion of republican forms prevent his adoption of this course, or of some other which would have secured to him the sympathy of multitudes. He might still have drawn some broad lines between his own administration and that of other states, tending to throw the old dynasties into the shade. He might have cast away the ancient pageantry and forms, distinguished himself by the simplicity of his establishments, and exaggerated the relief which he gave to his people, by saving them the burdens of a wasteful and luxurious court. He might have insisted on the great benefits that had accrued to France from the establishment of uniform laws, which protected alike all classes of men; and he might have virtually pledged himself to the subversion of the feudal inequalities which still disfigure Europe. He might have insisted on the favorable changes to be

introduced into property, by abolishing the entails which fettered it, the rights of primogeniture, and the exclusive privileges of a haughty aristocracy. He might have found abuses enough against which to array himself as a champion. By becoming the head of new institutions, which would have involved the transfer of power into new hands, and would have offered to the people a real improvement, he might everywhere have summoned to his standard the bold and enterprising, and might have disarmed the national prejudices to which he fell a prey. Revolution was still the true instrument of power. In a word, Napoleon lived at a period, when he could only establish a durable and universal control through principles and institutions of some kind or other, to which he would seem to be devoted.

It was impossible, however, for such a man as Napoleon, to adopt, perhaps to conceive, a system such as has now been traced; for it was wholly at war with that egotistical, self-relying, self-exaggerating principle, which was the most striking feature of his mind. He imagined himself able, not only to conquer nations, but to hold them together by the awe and admiration which his own character would inspire; and this bond he preferred to every other. An indirect sway, a control of nations by means of institutions, principles, or prejudices, of which he was to be only the apostle and defender, was utterly inconsistent with that vehemence of will, that passion for astonishing mankind, and that persuasion of his own invincibleness, which were his master feelings, and which made force his darling instrument of dominion. He chose to be the great, palpable, and sole bond of his empire; to have his image

reflected from every establishment; to be the centre, in which every ray of glory should meet, and from which every impulse should be propagated. In consequence of this egotism, he never dreamed of adapting himself to the moral condition of the world. The sword was his chosen weapon, and he used it without disguise. He insulted nations as well as sovereigns. He did not attempt to gild their chains, or to fit the yoke gently to their necks. The excess of his extortions, the audacity of his claims, and the insolent language in which Europe was spoken of as the vassal of the great empire, discovered, that he expected to reign, not only without linking himself with the interests, prejudices, and national feelings of men, but by setting all at defiance.

It would be easy to point out a multitude of instances in which he sacrificed the only policy by which he could prevail, to the persuasion, that his own greatness could more than balance whatever opposition his violence might awaken. In an age in which Christianity was exerting some power, there was certainly a degree of deference due to the moral convictions of society. But Napoleon thought himself more than a match for the moral instincts and sentiments of our nature. He thought himself able to cover the most atrocious deeds by the splendor of his name, and even to extort applause for crimes by the brilliancy of his success. He took no pains to conciliate esteem. In his own eyes he was mightier than conscience; and thus he turned against himself the power and resentment of virtue, in every breast where that divine principle yet found a home.

Through the same blinding egotism, he was anxious

to fill the thrones of Europe with men bearing his own name, and to multiply everywhere images of himself. Instead of placing over conquered countries efficient men, taken from themselves, who, by upholding better institutions, would carry with them large masses of the people, and who would still, by their hostility to the old dynasties, link their fortunes with his own, he placed over nations such men as Jerome and Murat. He thus spread a jealousy of his power, whilst he rendered it insecure; for as none of the princes of his creation, however well disposed, were allowed to identify themselves with their subjects, and to take root in the public heart, but were compelled to act, openly and without disguise, as satellites and prefects of the French emperor; they gained no hold on their subjects, and could bring no strength to their master in his hour of peril. In none of his arrangements did Napoleon think of securing to his cause the attachment of nations. Astonishment, awe, and force were his weapons, and his own great name the chosen pillar of his throne.

So far was Bonaparte from magnifying the contrast and distinctions between himself and the old dynasties of Europe, and from attaching men to himself by new principles and institutions, that he had the great weakness, for so we view it, to revive the old forms of monarchy, and to ape the manners of the old court, and thus to connect himself with the herd of legitimate sovereigns. This was not only to rob his government of that imposing character which might have been given to it, and of that interest which it might have inspired as an improvement on former institutions, but was to become competitor in a race in which he could not but be distanced. He could indeed pluck crowns from the

heads of monarchs; but he could not by any means infuse their blood into his veins, associate with himself the ideas which are attached to a long line of ancestry, or give to his court the grace of manners, which belongs to older establishments. His true policy was, to throw contempt on distinctions, which he could not rival; and, had he possessed the genius and spirit of the founder of a new era, he would have substituted for a crown, and for other long worn badges of power, a new and simple style of grandeur, and new insignia of dignity, more consonant with an enlightened age, and worthy of one who disdained to be a vulgar king. By the policy which he adopted, if it be worthy of that name, he became a vulgar king, and showed a mind incapable of answering the wants and demands of his age. It is well known, that the progress of intelligence had done much in Europe, to weaken men's reverence for pageantry and show. Nobles had learned to lay aside their trappings in ordinary life, and to appear as gentlemen. Even royalty had begun to retrench its pomp; and, in the face of all this improvement, Bonaparte stooped from his height, to study costumes, to legislate about court dresses and court manners, and to outshine his brother monarchs in their own line. He desired to add the glory of master of ceremonies to that of conqueror of nations. In his anxiety to belong to the caste of kings, he exacted scrupulously the observance and etiquette with which they are approached. Not satisfied with this approximation to the old sovereigns, with whom he had no common interest, and from whom he could not have removed himself too far, he sought to ally himself by marriage with the royal families in Europe, to ingraft himself and his posterity on an old

imperial tree. This was the very way to turn back opinion into its old channels; to carry back Europe to its old prejudices; to facilitate the restoration of its old order; to preach up legitimacy; to crush every hope that he was to work a beneficent change among nations. It may seem strange that his egotism did not preserve him from the imitation of antiquated monarchy. But his egotism, though excessive, was not lofty, nor was it seconded by a genius, rich and inventive, except in war.

We have now followed Napoleon to the height of his power, and given our views of the policy by which he hoped to make that power perpetual and unbounded. His fall is easily explained. It had its origin in that spirit of self-reliance and self-exaggeration, of which we have seen so many proofs. It began in Spain. That country was a province in reality. He wanted to make it one in name; to place over it a Bonaparte; to make it a more striking manifestation of his power. For this purpose, he "kidnapped" its royal family, stirred up the unconquerable spirit of its people, and, after shedding on its plains and mountains the best blood of France, lost it for ever. Next came his expedition against Russia, an expedition against which his wisest counsellors remonstrated, but which had every recommendation to a man who regarded himself as an exception to his race, and able to triumph over the laws of nature. So insane were his self-confidence and impatience of opposition, that he drove by his outrages Sweden, the old ally of France, into the arms of Russia, at the very moment that he was about to throw himself into the heart of that mighty empire. On his

Russian campaign we have no desire to enlarge. Of all the mournful pages of history, none are more sad than that which records the retreat of the French army from Moscow. We remember, that, when the intelligence of Napoleon's discomfiture in Russia first reached this country, we were among those who exulted in it, thinking only of the results. But, when subsequent and minuter accounts brought distinctly before our eyes that unequalled army of France, broken, famished, slaughtered, seeking shelter under snowdrifts, and perishing by intense cold, we looked back on our joy with almost a consciousness of guilt, and expiated by a sincere grief our insensibility to the sufferings of our fellow-creatures. We understand that many interesting notices of Napoleon, as he appeared in this disastrous campaign, are given in the Memoirs of Count Segur, a book, from which we have been repelled by the sorrows and miseries which it details. We can conceive few subjects more worthy of Shakspeare than the mind of Napoleon, at the moment, when his fate was sealed; when the tide of his victories was suddenly stopped and rolled backwards; when his dreams of invincibleness were broken as by a peal of thunder; when the word, which had awed nations, died away on the bleak waste, a powerless sound; and when he, whose spirit Europe could not bound, fled in fear from a captive's doom. The shock must have been tremendous to a mind so imperious, scornful, and unschooled to humiliation. The intense agony of that moment when he gave the unusual orders, to retreat; the desolateness of his soul, when he saw his brave soldiers and his chosen guards sinking in the snows, and perishing in crowds around him; his unwillingness to receive the details of his

losses, lest self-possession should fail him; the levity and badinage of his interview with the Abbé de Pradt at Warsaw, discovering a mind laboring to throw off an insupportable weight, wrestling with itself, struggling against misery; and, though last not least, his unconquerable purpose, still clinging to lost empire as the only good of life; these workings of such a spirit would have furnished to the great dramatist a theme, worthy of his transcendent powers.

By the irretrievable disasters of the Russian campaign, the empire of the world was effectually placed beyond the grasp of Napoleon. The tide of conquest had ebbed, never to return. The spell which had bound the nations was dissolved. He was no longer the Invincible. The weight of military power, which had kept down the spirit of nations, was removed, and their long-smothered sense of wrong and insult broke forth like the fires of a volcano. Bonaparte might still, perhaps, have secured the throne of France; but that of Europe was gone. This, however, he did not, could not, would not understand. He had connected with himself too obstinately the character of the world's master, to be able to relinquish it. Amidst the dark omens which gathered round him, he still saw, in his past wonderful escapes, and in his own exaggerated energies, the means of rebuilding his fallen power. Accordingly the thought of abandoning his pretensions does not seem to have crossed his mind, and his irreparable defeat was only a summons to new exertion. — We doubt, indeed, whether Napoleon, if he could have understood fully his condition, would have adopted a different course. Though despairing, he would probably have raised new armies, and fought to the last.

To a mind, which has placed its whole happiness in having no equal, the thought of descending to the level even of kings is intolerable. Napoleon's mind had been stretched by such ideas of universal empire, that France, though reaching from the Rhine to the Pyrenees, seemed narrow to him. He could not be shut up in it. Accordingly, as his fortunes darkened, we see no signs of relenting. He could not wear, he said, "a tarnished crown," that is, a crown no brighter than those of Austria and Russia. He continued to use a master's tone. He showed no change, but such as opposition works in the obstinate; he lost his temper and grew sour. He heaped reproaches on his marshals and the legislative body. He insulted Metternich, the statesman, on whom, above all others, his fate depended. He irritated Murat by sarcasms, which rankled within him, and accelerated, if they did not determine, his desertion of his master. It is a striking example of retribution, that the very vehemence and sternness of his will, which had borne him onward to dominion, now drove him to the rejection of terms which might have left him a formidable power, and thus made his ruin entire. Refusing to take counsel of events, he persevered in fighting with a stubborness, which reminds us of a spoiled child, who sullenly grasps what he knows he must relinquish, struggles without hope, and does not give over resistance, until his little fingers are one by one unclenched from the object on which he has set his heart. Thus fell Napoleon. We shall follow his history no farther. His retreat to Elba, his irruption into France, his signal overthrow, and his banishment to St. Helena, though they add to the romance of his history, throw no new light on his char-

acter, and would of course contribute nothing to our present object. There are indeed incidents in this portion of his life, which are somewhat inconsistent with the firmness and conscious superiority which belonged to him. But a man, into whose character so much impulse, and so little principle entered, must not be expected to preserve unblemished, in such hard reverses, the dignity and self-respect of an emperor and a hero.

In the course of these remarks, our views of the Conqueror, of the First Consul, and of the Emperor, have been given plainly and freely. The subject, however, is so important and interesting, that we have thought it worth our while, though at the hazard of some repetition, to bring together, in a narrower compass, what seem to us the great leading features of the intellectual and moral character of Napoleon Bonaparte.

His intellect was distinguished by rapidity of thought. He understood by a glance what most men, and superior men, could learn only by study. He darted to a conclusion rather by intuition than reasoning. In war, which was the only subject of which he was master, he seized in an instant on the great points of his own and his enemy's positions; and combined at once the movements, by which an overpowering force might be thrown with unexpected fury on a vulnerable part of the hostile line, and the fate of an army be decided in a day. He understood war as a science; but his mind was too bold, rapid, and irrepressible, to be enslaved by the technics of his profession. He found the old armies fighting by rule, and he discovered the true characteristic of genius, which, without despising rules,

knows when and how to break them. He understood thoroughly the immense moral power, which is gained by originality and rapidity of operation. He astonished and paralyzed his enemies by his unforeseen and impetuous assaults, by the suddenness with which the storm of battle burst upon them; and, whilst giving to his soldiers the advantages of modern discipline, breathed into them, by his quick and decisive movements, the enthusiasm of ruder ages. This power of disheartening the foe, and of spreading through his own ranks a confidence, and exhilarating courage, which made war a pastime, and seemed to make victory sure, distinguished Napoleon in an age of uncommon military talent, and was one main instrument of his future power.

The wonderful effects of that rapidity of thought by which Bonaparte was marked, the signal success of his new mode of warfare, and the almost incredible speed with which his fame was spread through the nations, had no small agency in fixing his character and determining for a period the fate of empires. These stirring influences infused a new consciousness of his own might. They gave intensity and audacity to his ambition; gave form and substance to his indefinite visions of glory, and raised his fiery hopes to empire. The burst of admiration, which his early career called forth, must in particular have had an influence, in imparting to his ambition that modification by which it was characterized, and which contributed alike to its success and to its fall. He began with *astonishing* the world, with producing a sudden and universal *sensation*, such as modern times had not witnessed. To *astonish* as well as to sway by his energies, became the great aim of his

life. Henceforth, to rule was not enough for Bonaparte. He wanted to amaze, to dazzle, to overpower men's souls, by striking, bold, magnificent, and unanticipated results. To govern ever so absolutely would not have satisfied him, if he must have governed silently. He wanted to reign through wonder and awe, by the grandeur and terror of his name, by displays of power which would rivet on him every eye, and make him the theme of every tongue. Power was his supreme object, but a power which should be gazed at as well as felt, which should strike men as a prodigy, which should shake old thrones as an earthquake, and, by the suddenness of its new creations, should awaken something of the submissive wonder which miraculous agency inspires.

Such seems to us to have been the distinction, or characteristic modification of his love of fame. It was a diseased passion for a kind of admiration, which, from the principles of our nature, cannot be enduring, and which demands for its support perpetual and more stimulating novelty. Mere esteem he would have scorned. Calm admiration, though universal and enduring, would have been insipid. He wanted to electrify and overwhelm. He lived for effect. The world was his theatre, and he cared little what part he played, if he might walk the sole hero on the stage, and call forth bursts of applause, which would silence all other fame. In war the triumphs which he coveted were those, in which he seemed to sweep away his foes like a whirlwind; and the immense and unparalleled sacrifices of his own soldiers, in the rapid marches and daring assaults to which he owed his victories, in no degree diminished their worth to the victor. In peace,

he delighted to hurry through his dominions; to multiply himself by his rapid movements; to gather at a glance the capacities of improvement which every important place possessed; to suggest plans which would startle by their originality and vastness; to project in an instant, works which a life could not accomplish, and to leave behind the impression of a superhuman energy.

Our sketch of Bonaparte would be imperfect indeed, if we did not add, that he was characterized by nothing more strongly than by the spirit of *self-exaggeration.* The singular energy of his intellect and will, through which he had mastered so many rivals and foes, and overcome what seemed insuperable obstacles, inspired a consciousness of being something more than man. His strong original tendencies to pride and self-exaltation, fed and pampered by strange success and unbounded applause, swelled into an almost insane conviction of superhuman greatness. In his own view, he stood apart from other men. He was not to be measured by the standard of humanity. He was not to be retarded by difficulties to which all others yielded. He was not to be subjected to laws and obligations which all others were expected to obey. Nature and the human will were to bend to his power. He was the child and favorite of fortune, and, if not the lord, the chief object of destiny. His history shows a spirit of self-exaggeration, unrivalled in enlightened ages, and which reminds us of an Oriental king to whom incense had been burnt from his birth as to a deity. This was the chief source of his crimes. He wanted the sentiment of a common nature with his fellow-beings. He had no sympathies with his race. That feeling of

brotherhood, which is developed in truly great souls with peculiar energy, and through which they give up themselves willing victims, joyful sacrifices, to the interests of mankind, was wholly unknown to him. His heart, amidst its wild beatings, never had a throb of disinterested love. The ties which bind man to man he broke asunder. The proper happiness of a man, which consists in the victory of moral energy and social affection over the selfish passions, he cast away for the lonely joy of a despot. With powers, which might have made him a glorious representative and minister of the beneficent Divinity, and with natural sensibilities which might have been exalted into sublime virtues, he chose to separate himself from his kind, to forego their love, esteem, and gratitude, that he might become their gaze, their fear, their wonder; and, for this selfish, solitary good, parted with peace and imperishable renown.

This insolent exaltation of himself above the race to which he belonged, broke out in the beginning of his career. His first success in Italy gave him the tone of a master, and he never laid it aside to his last hour. One can hardly help being struck with the *natural* manner with which he arrogates supremacy in his conversation and proclamations. We never feel as if he were putting on a lordly air. In his proudest claims, he speaks from his own mind, and in native language. His style is swollen, but never strained, as if he were conscious of playing a part above his real claims. Even when he was foolish and impious enough to arrogate miraculous powers and a mission from God, his language showed that he thought there was something in his character and exploits to give a color to

his blasphemous pretensions. The empire of the world seemed to him to be in a measure his due, for nothing short of it corresponded with his conceptions of himself; and he did not use mere verbiage, but spoke a language to which he gave some credit, when he called his successive conquests "the fulfilment of his destiny."

This spirit of self-exaggeration wrought its own misery, and drew down upon him terrible punishments; and this it did by vitiating and perverting his high powers. First, it diseased his fine intellect, gave imagination the ascendency over judgment, turned the inventiveness and fruitfulness of his mind into rash, impatient, restless energies, and thus precipitated him into projects, which, as the wisdom of his counsellors pronounced, were fraught with ruin. To a man, whose vanity took him out of the rank of human beings, no foundation for reasoning was left. All things seemed possible. His genius and his fortune were not to be bounded by the barriers, which experience had assigned to human powers. Ordinary rules did not apply to him. He even found excitement and motives in obstacles, before which other men would have wavered; for these would enhance the glory of triumph, and give a new thrill to the admiration of the world. Accordingly he again and again plunged into the depths of an enemy's country, and staked his whole fortune and power on a single battle. To be rash was indeed the necessary result of his self-exalting and self-relying spirit; for to dare what no other man would dare, to accomplish what no other man would attempt, was the very way to display himself as a superior being in his own and others' eyes. — To be impatient and restless was another necessary

issue of the attributes we have described. The calmness of wisdom was denied him. He, who was next to omnipotent in his own eyes, and who delighted to strike and astonish by sudden and conspicuous operations, could not brook delay or wait for the slow operations of time. A work, which was to be gradually matured by the joint agency of various causes, could not suit a man, who wanted to be felt as the great, perhaps only, cause; who wished to stamp his own agency in the most glaring characters on whatever he performed; and who hoped to rival, by a sudden energy, the steady and progressive works of nature. Hence so many of his projects were never completed, or only announced. They swelled, however, the tide of flattery, which ascribed to him the completion of what was not yet begun, whilst his restless spirit, rushing to new enterprises, forgot its pledges, and left the promised prodigies of his creative genius to exist only in the records of adulation. — Thus the rapid and inventive intellect of Bonaparte was depraved, and failed to achieve a growing and durable greatness. It reared, indeed, a vast and imposing structure, but disproportioned, disjointed, without strength, without foundations. One strong blast was enough to shake and shatter it, nor could his genius uphold it. Happy would it have been for his fame, had he been buried in its ruins!

One of the striking properties of Bonaparte's character was decision, and this, as we have already seen, was perverted, by the spirit of self-exaggeration, into an inflexible stubbornness, which counsel could not enlighten, nor circumstances bend. Having taken the first step, he pressed onward. His purpose he wished others to regard as a law of nature, or a decree of

destiny. It *must* be accomplished. Resistance but strengthened it; and so often had resistance been overborne, that he felt as if his unconquerable will, joined to his matchless intellect, could vanquish all things. On such a mind the warnings of human wisdom and of Providence were spent in vain; and the Man of Destiny lived to teach others, if not himself, the weakness and folly of that all-defying decision, which arrays the purposes of a mortal with the immutableness of the counsels of the Most High.

A still more fatal influence of the spirit of self-exaggeration, which characterized Bonaparte, remains to be named. It depraved to an extraordinary degree his moral sense. It did not obliterate altogether the ideas of duty, but by a singular perversion, it impelled him to apply them exclusively to others. It never seemed to enter his thought, that he was subject to the great obligations of morality, which all others are called to respect. He was an exempted being. Whatever stood in his way to empire, he was privileged to remove. Treaties only bound his enemies. No nation had rights but his own France. He claimed a monopoly in perfidy and violence. He was not naturally cruel; but, when human life obstructed his progress, it was a lawful prey, and murder and assassination occasioned as little compunction as war. The most luminous exposition of his moral code was given in his counsels to the King of Holland. "Never forget, that, in the situation to which my political system and the interests of my empire have called you, your first duty is towards ME, your second towards France. All your other duties, even those towards the people whom I have called you to govern, rank after these." To

his own mind he was the source and centre of duty. He was too peculiar and exalted, to be touched by that vulgar stain, called guilt. Crimes ceased to be such, when perpetrated by himself. Accordingly he always speaks of his transgressions as of indifferent acts. He never imagined that they tarnished his glory, or diminished his claim on the homage of the world. In St. Helena, though talking perpetually of himself, and often reviewing his guilty career, we are not aware that a single compunction escapes him. He speaks of his life as calmly as if it had been consecrated to duty and beneficence, whilst in the same breath he has the audacity to reproach unsparingly the faithlessness of almost every individual and nation, with whom he had been connected. We doubt whether history furnishes so striking an example of the moral blindness and obduracy, to which an unbounded egotism exposes and abandons the mind.

His spirit of self-exaggeration was seen in his openness to adulation. Policy indeed prompted him to put his praises into the mouths of the venal slaves, who administered his despotism. But flattery would not have been permitted to swell into exaggerations, now nauseous, now ludicrous, and now impious, if, in the bosom of the chief, there had not lodged a flatterer who sounded a louder note of praise than all around him. He was remarkably sensitive to opinion, and resented as a wrong the suppression of his praises. The press of all countries was watched, and free states were called upon to curb it for daring to take liberties with his name. Even in books published in France on general topics, he expected a recognition of his authority. Works of talent were suppressed, when their

authors refused to offer incense at the new shrine. He resolved, indeed, to stamp his name on the literature, as on the legislation, policy, warfare of his age, and to compel genius, whose pages survive statues, columns, and empires, to take a place among his tributaries.

We close our view of Bonaparte's character, by saying, that his original propensities, released from restraint, and pampered by indulgence, to a degree seldom allowed to mortals, grew up into a spirit of despotism as stern and absolute as ever usurped the human heart. The love of power and supremacy absorbed, consumed him. No other passion, no domestic attachment, no private friendship, no love of pleasure, no relish for letters or the arts, no human sympathy, no human weakness, divided his mind with the passion for dominion and for dazzling manifestations of his power. Before this, duty, honor, love, humanity, fell prostrate. Josephine, we are told, was dear to him; but the devoted wife, who had stood firm and faithful in the day of his doubtful fortunes, was cast off in his prosperity, to make room for a stranger, who might be more subservient to his power. He was affectionate, we are told, to his brothers and mother; but his brothers, the moment they ceased to be his tools, were disgraced; and his mother, it is said, was not allowed to sit in the presence of her imperial son.* He was sometimes softened, we are told, by the sight of the field of battle strewn with the wounded and dead. But, if the Moloch of his ambition claimed new heaps of slain to-morrow, it was

* See "America," page 57. We should not give this very unamiable trait of Napoleon's domestic character, but on authority which we cannot question

never denied. With all his sensibility, he gave millions to the sword, with as little compunction as he would have brushed away so many insects, which had infested his march. To him all human will, desire, power, were to bend. His superiority none might question. He insulted the fallen, who had contracted the guilt of opposing his progress; and not even woman's loveliness, and the dignity of a queen, could give shelter from his contumely. His allies were his vassals, nor was their vassalage concealed. Too lofty to use the arts of conciliation, preferring command to persuasion, overbearing, and all-grasping, he spread distrust, exasperation, fear, and revenge through Europe; and, when the day of retribution came, the old antipathies and mutual jealousies of nations were swallowed up in one burning purpose to prostrate the common tyrant, the universal foe.

Such was Napoleon Bonaparte. But some will say, he was still a great man. This we mean not to deny. But we would have it understood, that there are various kinds or orders of greatness, and that the highest did not belong to Bonaparte. There are different orders of greatness. Among these the first rank is unquestionably due to *moral* greatness, or magnanimity; to that sublime energy, by which the soul, smitten with the love of virtue, binds itself indissolubly, for life and for death, to truth and duty; espouses as its own the interests of human nature; scorns all meanness and defies all peril; hears in its own conscience a voice louder than threatenings and thunders; withstands all the powers of the universe, which would sever it from the cause of freedom and religion; reposes an unfaltering trust in God in the darkest hour, and is ever "ready to be

offered up" on the altar of its country or of mankind. Of this moral greatness, which throws all other forms of greatness into obscurity, we see not a trace in Napoleon. Though clothed with the power of a god, the thought of consecrating himself to the introduction of a new and higher era, to the exaltation of the character and condition of his race, seems never to have dawned on his mind. The spirit of disinterestedness and self-sacrifice seems not to have waged a moment's war with self-will and ambition. His ruling passions, indeed, were singularly at variance with magnanimity. Moral greatness has too much simplicity, is too unostentatious, too self-subsistent, and enters into others' interests with too much heartiness, to live an hour for what Napoleon always lived, to make itself the theme, and gaze, and wonder of a dazzled world. — Next to moral, comes *intellectual* greatness, or genius in the highest sense of that word; and by this we mean that sublime capacity of thought, through which the soul, smitten with the love of the true and the beautiful, essays to comprehend the universe, soars into the heavens, penetrates the earth, penetrates itself, questions the past, anticipates the future, traces out the general and all-comprehending laws of nature, binds together by innumerable affinities and relations all the objects of its knowledge, rises from the finite and transient to the infinite and the everlasting, frames to itself from its own fulness lovelier and sublimer forms than it beholds, discerns the harmonies between the world within and the world without us, and finds in every region of the universe types and interpreters of its own deep mysteries and glorious inspirations. This is the greatness which belongs to philosophers, and to the master spirits in

poetry and the fine arts.—Next comes the greatness of *action*; and by this we mean the sublime power of conceiving bold and extensive plans; of constructing and bringing to bear on a mighty object a complicated machinery of means, energies, and arrangements, and of accomplishing great outward effects. To this head belongs the greatness of Bonaparte, and that he possessed it, we need not prove, and none will be hardy enough to deny. A man, who raised himself from obscurity to a throne, who changed the face of the world, who made himself felt through powerful and civilized nations, who sent the terror of his name across seas and oceans, whose will was pronounced and feared as destiny, whose donatives were crowns, whose antechamber was thronged by submissive princes, who broke down the awful barrier of the Alps and made them a highway, and whose fame was spread beyond the boundaries of civilization to the steppes of the Cossack, and the deserts of the Arab; a man, who has left this record of himself in history, has taken out of our hands the question, whether he shall be called great. All must concede to him a sublime power of action, an energy equal to great effects.

We are not disposed, however, to consider him as preëminent even in this order of greatness. War was his chief sphere. He gained his ascendency in Europe by the sword. But war is not the field for the highest active talent, and Napoleon, we suspect, was conscious of this truth. The glory of being the greatest general of his age would not have satisfied him. He would have scorned to take his place by the side of Marlborough or Turenne. It was as the founder of an empire, which threatened for a time to comprehend the world,

and which demanded other talents besides that of war, that he challenged unrivalled fame. And here we question his claim. Here we cannot award him supremacy. The project of universal empire, however imposing, was not original. The revolutionary governments of France had adopted it before; nor can we consider it as a sure indication of greatness, when we remember that the weak and vain mind of Louis the Fourteenth was large enough to cherish it. The question is; Did Napoleon bring to this design the capacity of advancing it by bold and original conceptions, adapted to an age of civilization, and of singular intellectual and moral excitement? Did he discover new foundations of power? Did he frame new bonds of union for subjugated nations? Did he discover, or originate, some common interests by which his empire might be held together? Did he breathe a spirit which could supplant the old national attachments, or did he invent any substitutes for those vulgar instruments of force and corruption, which any and every usurper would have used? Never in the records of time did the world furnish such materials to work with, such means of modelling nations afresh, of building up a new power, of introducing a new era, as did Europe at the period of the French Revolution. Never was the human mind so capable of new impulses. And did Napoleon prove himself equal to the condition of the world? Do we detect one original conception in his means of universal empire? Did he seize on the enthusiasm of his age, that powerful principle, more efficient than arms or policy, and bend it to his purpose? What did he do but follow the beaten track? but apply force and fraud in their very coarsest forms? Napoleon showed a vulgar mind,

when he assumed self-interest as the sole spring of human action. With the sword in one hand and bribes in the other, he imagined himself absolute master of the human mind. The strength of moral, national, and domestic feeling, he could not comprehend. The finest, and, after all, the most powerful elements in human nature hardly entered into his conceptions of it; and how then could he have established a durable power over the human race? We want little more to show his want of originality and comprehensiveness, as the founder of an empire, than the simple fact, that he chose as his chief counsellors Talleyrand and Fouché, names which speak for themselves. We may judge of the greatness of the master spirit, from the minds which he found most congenial with his own. In war, Bonaparte was great; for he was bold, original, and creative. Beyond the camp he indeed showed talent, but not superior to that of other eminent men.

There have been two circumstances, which have done much to disarm or weaken the strong moral reprobation with which Bonaparte ought to have been regarded, and which we deem worthy of notice. We refer to the wrongs which he is supposed to have suffered at St. Helena, and to the unworthy use which the Allied Powers have made of their triumph over Napoleon. First, his supposed wrongs at St. Helena have excited a sympathy in his behalf, which has thrown a veil over his crimes. We are not disposed to deny, that an unwarrantable, because unnecessary, severity was exercised towards Bonaparte. We think it not very creditable to the British government, that it tortured a sensitive captive by refusing him a title

which he had long worn. We think, that not only religion and humanity, but self-respect forbids us to inflict a single useless pang on a fallen foe. But we should be weak indeed, if the moral judgments and feelings, with which Napoleon's career ought to be reviewed, should give place to sympathy with the sufferings by which it was closed. With regard to the scruples, which not a few have expressed, as to the right of banishing him to St. Helena, we can only say, that our consciences are not yet refined to such exquisite delicacy, as to be at all sensitive on this particular. We admire nothing more in Bonaparte, than the effrontery with which he claimed protection from the laws of nations. That a man, who had set these laws at open defiance, should fly to them for shelter; that the oppressor of the world should claim its sympathy as an oppressed man, and that his claim should find advocates; these things are to be set down among the extraordinary events of this extraordinary age. Truly, the human race is in a pitiable state. It may be trampled on, spoiled, loaded like a beast of burden, made the prey of rapacity, insolence, and the sword; but it must not touch a hair, or disturb the pillow, of one of its oppressors, unless it can find chapter and verse in the code of national law, to authorize its rudeness towards the privileged offender. For ourselves, we should rejoice to see every tyrant, whether a usurper or hereditary prince, fastened to a lonely rock in the ocean. Whoever gives clear, undoubted proof, that he is prepared and sternly resolved to make the earth a slaughterhouse, and to crush every will adverse to his own, ought to be caged like a wild beast; and to require mankind to proceed against him according to

written laws and precedents, as if he were a private citizen in a quiet court of justice, is just as rational as to require a man, in imminent peril from an assassin, to wait and prosecute his murderer according to the most protracted forms of law. There are great solemn rights of nature, which precede laws, and on which law is founded. There are great exigencies in human affairs, which speak for themselves, and need no precedent to teach the right path. There are awful periods in the history of our race, which do not belong to its ordinary state, and which are not to be governed and judged by ordinary rules. Such a period was that, when Bonaparte, by infraction of solemn engagements, had thrown himself into France, and convulsed all Europe; and they, who confound this with the ordinary events of history, and see in Bonaparte but an ordinary foe to the peace and independence of nations, have certainly very different intellects from our own.

We confess, too, that we are not only unable to see the wrong done to Napoleon in sending him to St. Helena, but that we cannot muster up much sympathy for the inconveniences and privations which he endured there. Our sympathies in this particular are wayward and untractable. When we would carry them to that solitary island, and fasten them on the illustrious victim of British cruelty, they will not tarry there, but take their flight across the Mediterranean to Jaffa, and across the Atlantic to the platform where the Duke d'Enghien was shot, to the prison of Toussaint, and to fields of battle where thousands at his bidding lay weltering in blood. When we strive to fix our thoughts upon the sufferings of the injured hero, other and more terrible sufferings, of which he was the cause, rush

upon us; and his complaints, however loud and angry, are drowned by groans and execrations, which fill our ears from every region which he traversed. We have no tears to spare for fallen greatness, when that greatness was founded in crime, and reared by force and perfidy. We reserve them for those on whose ruin it rose. We keep our sympathies for our race, for human nature in its humbler forms, for the impoverished peasant, the widowed mother, the violated virgin; and are even perverse enough to rejoice, that the ocean has a prison-house, where the author of those miseries may be safely lodged. Bonaparte's history is to us too solemn, the wrongs for which humanity and freedom arraign him are too flagrant, to allow us to play the part of sentimentalists around his grave at St. Helena. We leave this to the more refined age in which we live; and we do so in the hope, that an age is coming of less tender mould, but of loftier, sterner feeling, and of deeper sympathy with the whole human race. Should our humble page then live, we trust with an undoubting faith, that the uncompromising indignation, with which we plead the cause of our oppressed and insulted nature, will not be set down to the account of vindictiveness and hardness of heart.

We observed, that the moral indignation of many towards Bonaparte had been impaired or turned away, not only by his supposed wrongs, but by the unworthy use which his conquerors made of their triumph. We are told, that, bad as was his despotism, the Holy Alliance is a worse one; and that Napoleon was less a scourge, than the present coalition of the continental monarchs, framed for the systematic suppression of freedom. By such reasoning, his crimes are cloaked,

and his fall is made a theme of lamentation. It is not one of the smallest errors and sins of the Allied Sovereigns, that they have contrived, by their base policy, to turn the resentments and moral displeasure of men from the usurper upon themselves. For these sovereigns we have no defence to offer. We yield to none in detestation of the Holy Alliance, profanely so called. To us its doctrines are as false and pestilent, as any broached by Jacobinism. The Allied Monarchs are adding to the other wrongs of despots, that of flagrant ingratitude; of ingratitude to the generous and brave nations, to whom they owe their thrones, whose spirit of independence and patriotism, and whose hatred of the oppressor, contributed more than standing armies to raise up the fallen, and to strengthen the falling, monarchies of Europe. Be it never forgotten in the records of despotism, let history record it on her most durable tablet, that the first use made by the principal continental sovereigns of their regained or confirmed power, was, to conspire against the hopes and rights of the nations by whom they had been saved; to combine the military power of Europe against free institutions, against the press, against the spirit of liberty and patriotism which had sprung up in the glorious struggle with Napoleon, against the right of the people to exert an influence on the governments by which their dearest interests were to be controlled. Never be it forgotten, that such was the honor of sovereigns, such their requital for the blood which had been shed freely in their defence. Freedom and humanity send up a solemn and prevailing cry against them, to that tribunal, where kings and subjects are soon to stand as equals.

But still we should be strangely blind, if we were

not to feel, that the fall of Napoleon was a blessing to the world. Who can look, for example, at France, and not see there a degree of freedom, which could never have grown up under the terrible frown of the usurper? True, Bonaparte's life, though it seemed a charmed one, must at length have ended; and we are told, that then his empire would have been broken, and that the general crash, by some inexplicable process, would have given birth to a more extensive and durable liberty, than can now be hoped. But such anticipations seem to us to be built on a strange inattention to the nature and inevitable consequences of Napoleon's power. It was wholly a military power. He was literally turning Europe into a camp, and drawing its best talent into one occupation, war. Thus Europe was retracing its steps to those ages of calamity and darkness, when the only law was the sword. The progress of centuries, which had consisted chiefly in the substitution of intelligence, public opinion, and other mild and rational influences, for brutal force, was to be reversed. At Bonaparte's death, his empire must, indeed, have been dissolved; but military chiefs, like Alexander's lieutenants, would have divided it. The sword alone would have shaped its future communities; and, after years of desolation and bloodshed, Europe would have found, not repose, but a respite, an armed truce, under warriors, whose only title to empire would have been their own good blades, and the weight of whose thrones would have been upheld by military force alone. Amidst such convulsions, during which the press would have been everywhere fettered, and the military spirit would have triumphed over and swallowed up the spirit and glory of letters

and liberal arts, we greatly fear, that the human intellect would have lost its present impulse, its thirst for progress, and would have fallen back towards barbarism. Let not the friends of freedom bring dishonor on themselves or desert their cause, by instituting comparisons between Napoleon and legitimate sovereigns, which may be construed into eulogies on the former. For ourselves, we have no sympathy with tyranny, whether it bear the name of usurpation or legitimacy. We are not pleading the cause of the Allied Sovereigns. In our judgment, they have contracted the very guilt against which they have pretended to combine. In our apprehension, a conspiracy against the rights of the human race is as foul a crime, as rebellion against the rights of sovereigns; nor is there less of treason in warring against public freedom, than in assailing royal power. Still we are bound in truth to confess, that the Allied Sovereigns are not to be ranked with Bonaparte, whose design against the independence of nations and the liberties of the world, in this age of civilization, liberal thinking, and Christian knowledge, is in our estimation the most nefarious enterprise recorded in history.

The series of events, which it has been our province to review, offers subjects of profound thought and solemn instruction to the moralist and politician. We have retraced it with many painful feelings. It shows us a great people, who had caught some indistinct glimpses of freedom, and of a nobler and a happier political constitution, betrayed by their leaders, and brought back, by a military despot, to heavier chains than they had broken. We see with indignation one

man, a man like ourselves, subjecting whole nations to his absolute rule. It is this wrong and insult to our race which has chiefly moved us. Had a storm, of God's ordination, passed over Europe, prostrating its capitals, sweeping off its villages, burying millions in ruins, we should have wept, we should have trembled. But in this there would have been only wretchedness. Now we also see debasement. To us there is something radically and increasingly shocking, in the thought of one man's will becoming a law to his race ; in the thought of multitudes, of vast communities, surrendering conscience, intellect, their affections, their rights, their interests to the stern mandate of a fellow-creature. When we see one word of a frail man on the throne of France tearing a hundred thousand sons from their homes, breaking asunder the sacred ties of domestic life, sentencing myriads of the young to make murder their calling and rapacity their means of support, and extorting from nations their treasures to extend this ruinous sway, we are ready to ask ourselves, Is not this a dream ? And, when the sad reality comes home to us, we blush for a race which can stoop to such an abject lot. At length, indeed, we see the tyrant humbled, stripped of power ; but stripped by those who, in the main, are not unwilling to play the despot on a narrower scale, and to break down the spirit of nations under the same iron sway.

How is it, that tyranny has thus triumphed ? that the hopes with which we greeted the French revolution have been crushed ? that a usurper plucked up the last roots of the tree of liberty, and planted despotism in its place ? The chief cause is not far to seek, nor can it be too often urged on the friends of freedom.

France failed through the want of that moral preparation for liberty, without which the blessing cannot be secured. She was not ripe for the good she sought. She was too corrupt for freedom. France had indeed to contend with great political ignorance; but had not ignorance been re-inforced by deep moral defect, she might have won her way to free institutions. Her character forbade her to be free; and it now seems strange that we could ever have expected her to secure this boon. How could we believe, that a liberty, of which that heartless scoffer, Voltaire, was a chief apostle, could have triumphed? Most of the preachers of French liberty had thrown off all the convictions which ennoble the mind. Man's connexion with God they broke, for they declared that there was no God in whom to trust in the great struggle for liberty. Human immortality, that truth which is the seed of all greatness, they derided. To their philosophy, man was a creature of chance, a compound of matter, an ephemeron, a worm, who was soon to rot and perish for ever. What insanity was it to expect, that such men were to work out the emancipation of their race! that in such hands the hopes and dearest rights of humanity were secure! Liberty was tainted by their touch, polluted by their breath, and yet we trusted that it was to rise in health and glory from their embrace. We looked to men, who openly founded morality on private interest, for the sacrifices, the devotion, the heroic virtue, which Freedom always demands from her assertors.

The great cause of the discomfiture of the late European struggle for liberty, is easily understood by an American, who recurs to the history of his own

revolution. This issued prosperously, because it was begun and was conducted under the auspices of private and public virtue. Our liberty did not come to us by accident, nor was it the gift of a few leaders; but its seeds were sown plentifully in the minds of the whole people. It was rooted in the conscience and reason of the nation. It was the growth of deliberate convictions and generous principles liberally diffused. We had no Paris, no metropolis, which a few leaders swayed, and which sent forth its influences, like "a mighty heart," through dependent and subservient provinces. The country was all heart. The living principle pervaded the community, and every village added strength to the solemn purpose of being free. We have here an explanation of a striking fact in the history of our revolution; we mean the want or absence of that description of great men, whom we meet in other countries; men, who, by their distinct and single agency, and by their splendid deeds, determine a nation's fate. There was too much greatness in the American people, to admit this overshadowing greatness of leaders. Accordingly the United States had no liberator, no political saviour. Washington indeed conferred on us great blessings. But Washington was not a hero, in the common sense of that word. We never spoke of him as the French did of Bonaparte, never talked of his eagle-eyed, irresistible genius, as if this were to work out our safety. We never lost our self-respect. We felt that, under God, we were to be free through our own courage, energy, and wisdom, under the animating and guiding influences of this great and good mind. Washington served us chiefly by his sublime moral qualities. — To him belonged the

proud distinction of being the leader in a revolution, without awakening one doubt or solicitude as to the spotless purity of his purpose. His was the glory of being the brightest manifestation of the spirit which reigned in his country; and in this way he became a source of energy, a bond of union, the centre of an enlightened people's confidence. In such a revolution as that of France, Washington would have been nothing; for that sympathy, which subsisted between him and his fellow-citizens, and which was the secret of his power, would have been wanting. By an instinct which is unerring, we call Washington, with grateful reverence, the Father of his country, but not its Saviour. A people, which wants a saviour, which does not possess an earnest and pledge of freedom in its own heart, is not yet ready to be free.

A great question here offers itself, at which we can only glance. If a moral preparation is required for freedom, how, it is asked, can Europe ever be free? How, under the despotisms which now crush the continent, can nations grow ripe for liberty? Is it to be hoped, that men will learn, in the school of slavery, the spirit and virtues, which, we are told, can alone work out their deliverance? In the absolute governments of Europe, the very instruments of forming an enlightened and generous love of freedom are bent into the service of tyranny. The press is an echo of the servile doctrines of the court. The schools and seminaries of education are employed to taint the young mind with the maxims of despotism. Even Christianity is turned into a preacher of legitimacy, and its temples are desecrated by the abject teaching of unconditional submission. How then is the spirit

of a wise and moral freedom to be generated and diffused? We have stated the difficulty in its full force; for nothing is gained by winking out of sight the tremendous obstacles, with which liberal principles and institutions must contend. We have not time at present to answer the great question now proposed. We will only say, that we do not despair; and we will briefly suggest what seems to us the chief expedient, by which the cause of freedom, obstructed as it is, must now be advanced. In despotic countries, those men whom God has inspired with lofty sentiments and a thirst for freedom (and such are spread through all Europe,) must, in their individual capacity, communicate themselves to individual minds. The cause of liberty on the continent cannot now be forwarded by the action of men in masses. But in every country there are those who feel their degradation and their wrongs, who abhor tyranny as the chief obstruction of the progress of nations, and who are willing and prepared to suffer for liberty. Let such men spread around them their own spirit, by every channel which a jealous despotism has not closed. Let them give utterance to sentiments of magnanimity in private conference, and still more by the press; for there are modes of clothing and expressing kindling truths, which, it is presumed, no censorship would dare to proscribe. Let them especially teach that great truth, which is the seminal principle of a virtuous freedom, and the very foundation of morals and religion; we mean, the doctrine, that conscience, the voice of God in every heart, is to be listened to above all other guides and lords; that there is a sovereign within us, clothed with more awful powers and rights than any

outward king; and that he alone is worthy the name of a man, who gives himself up solemnly, deliberately, to obey this internal guide through peril and in death. This is the spirit of freedom; for no man is wholly and immutably free but he who has broken every outward yoke, that he may obey his own deliberate conscience. This is the lesson to be taught alike in republics and despotisms. As yet it has but dawned on the world. Its full application remains to be developed. They who have been baptized, by a true experience, into this vital and all-comprehending truth, must everywhere be its propagators; and he, who makes one convert of it near a despot's throne, has broken one link of that despot's chain. It is chiefly in the diffusion of this loftiness of moral sentiment that we place our hope of freedom; and we have a hope, because we know that there are those who have drunk into this truth, and are ready, when God calls, to be its martyrs. We do not despair, for there is a contagion, we would rather say, a divine power, in sublime moral principle. This is our chief trust. We have less and less hope from force and bloodshed, as the instruments of working out man's redemption from slavery. History shows us not a few princes, who have gained or strengthened thrones by assassination or war. But freedom, which is another name for justice, honor, and benevolence, scorns to use the private dagger, and wields with trembling the public sword. The true conspiracy before which tyranny is to fall, is that of virtuous, elevated minds, which shall consecrate themselves to the work of awakening in men a consciousness of the rights, powers, purposes, and greatness of human nature; which shall oppose to force, the heroism of intellect

and conscience, and the spirit of self-sacrifice. We believe, that, at this moment, there are virtue and wisdom enough to shake despotic thrones, were they as confiding as they should be, in God and in their own might, and were they to pour themselves through every channel into the public mind.

We close our present labors, with commending to the protection of Almighty God the cause of human freedom and improvement. We adore the wisdom and goodness of his providence, which has ordained, that liberty shall be wrought ought by the magnanimity, courage, and sacrifices of men. We bless him for the glorious efforts which this cause has already called forth; for the intrepid defenders who have gathered round it, and whose fame is a most precious legacy of past ages; for the toils and sufferings by which it has been upheld; for the awakening and thrilling voice which comes to us from the dungeon and scaffold, where the martyrs of liberty have pined or bled. We bless him, that even tyranny has been overruled for good, by exciting a resistance, which has revealed to us the strength of virtuous principle in the human soul. We beseech this Great and Good Parent, from whom all pure influences proceed, to enkindle, by his quickening breath, an unquenchable love of virtue and freedom in those favored men, whom he hath enriched and signalized by eminent gifts and powers, that they may fulfil the high function of inspiring their fellow-beings with a consciousness of the birthright and destination of human nature. Wearied with violence and blood, we beseech him to subvert oppressive governments, by the gentle, yet awful, power of truth and virtue; by the teachings of uncorrupted Christianity; by the

sovereignty of enlightened opinion; by the triumph of sentiments of magnanimity; by mild, rational, and purifying influences, which will raise the spirit of the enslaved, and which sovereigns will be unable to withstand. For this peaceful revolution we earnestly pray. If, however, after long, forbearing, and unavailing applications to justice and humanity, the friends of freedom should be summoned, by the voice of God within, and by his providence abroad, to vindicate their rights with other arms, to do a sterner work, to repel despotic force by force, may they not forget, even in this hour of provocation, the spirit which their high calling demands. Let them take the sword with awe, as those on whom a holy function is devolved. Let them regard themselves as ministers and delegates of Him, whose dearest attribute is Mercy. Let them not stain their sacred cause by one cruel deed, by the infliction of one needless pang, by shedding without cause one drop of human blood.

# PART II.

In a former number of our work,* we reviewed the life and character of Napoleon Bonaparte. We resume the subject, not for the purpose of speaking more largely of the individual, but that we may consider more distinctly the *principle of action* which governed him, and of which he was a remarkable manifestation.

Power was the idol to which Bonaparte sacrificed himself. To gain supremacy and unlimited sway, to subject men to his will, was his chief, settled, unrelenting purpose. This passion drew and converted into itself the whole energy of his nature. The love of power, that common principle, explains, in a great degree, his character and life. His crimes did not spring from any impulse peculiar to himself. With all his contempt of the human race, he still belonged to it. It is true both of the brightest virtues and the blackest vices, though they seem to set apart their possessors from the rest of mankind, that the seeds of them are sown in every human breast. The man, who attracts and awes us by his intellectual and moral grandeur, is only an example and anticipation of the improvements, for which every mind was endowed with reason and conscience; and the worst man has become such by the perversion and excess of desires and appetites

* Christian Examiner, Vol. IV. No. V.

which he shares with his whole race. Napoleon had no element of character which others do not possess. It was his misery and guilt that he was usurped and absorbed by one passion; that his whole mind shot up into one growth; that his singular strength of thought and will, which, if consecrated to virtue, would have enrolled him among the benefactors of mankind, was enslaved by one lust. He is not to be gazed on as a miracle. He was a manifestation of our own nature. He teaches on a large scale what thousands teach on a narrow one. He shows us the greatness of the ruin which is wrought, when the order of the mind is subverted, conscience dethroned, and a strong passion left without restraint to turn every inward and outward resource to the accomplishment of a selfish purpose.

The influence of the *love of power* on human affairs is so constant, unbounded, and tremendous, that we think this principle of our nature worthy of distinct consideration, and shall devote to it a few pages, as a fit sequel to our notice of Bonaparte.

The passion for power is one of the most universal; nor is it to be regarded as a crime in all its forms. Sweeping censures on a natural sentiment cast blame on the Creator. This principle shows itself in the very dawn of our existence. The child never exults and rejoices more, than when it becomes conscious of power by overcoming difficulties, or compassing new ends. All our desires and appetites lend aid and energy to this passion, for all find increase of gratification, in proportion to the growth of our strength and influence. We ought to add, that this principle is fed from nobler sources. Power is a chief element of all the command-

ing qualities of our nature. It enters into all the higher virtues; such as magnanimity, fortitude, constancy. It enters into intellectual eminence. It is power of thought and utterance which immortalizes the products of genius. Is it strange that an attribute, through which all our passions reach their objects, and which characterizes whatever is great or admirable in man, should awaken intense desire, and be sought as one of the chief goods of life?

This principle, we have said, is not in all its forms a crime. There are indeed various kinds of power, which it is our duty to covet, accumulate, and hold fast. First, there is *inward* power, the most precious of all possessions; power over ourselves; power to withstand trial, to bear suffering, to front danger; power over pleasure and pain; power to follow our convictions, however resisted by menace or scorn; the power of calm reliance in seasons of darkness and storms. Again, there is a power over *outward* things; the power by which the mind triumphs over matter, presses into its service the subtilest and strongest elements, makes the winds, fire, and steam its ministers, rears the city, opens a path through the ocean, and makes the wilderness blossom as the rose. These forms of power, especially the first, are glorious distinctions of our race, nor can we prize them too highly.

There is another power, which is our principal concern in the present discussion. We mean power over our fellow-creatures. It is this which ambition chiefly covets, and which has instigated to more crime, and spread more misery, than any other cause. We are not however to condemn even this universally. There is a truly noble sway of man over man; one, which it

is our honor to seek and exert; which is earned by well-doing; which is a chief recompense of virtue. We refer to the quickening influence of a good and great mind over other minds, by which it brings them into sympathy with itself. Far from condemning this, we are anxious to hold it forth as the purest glory which virtuous ambition can propose. The power of awakening, enlightening, elevating our fellow-creatures may, with peculiar fitness, be called divine; for there is no agency of God so beneficent and sublime as that which he exerts on rational natures, and by which he assimilates them to himself. This sway over other souls is the surest test of greatness. We admire, indeed, the energy which subdues the material creation, or developes the physicial resources of a state. But it is a nobler might which calls forth the intellectual and moral resources of a people, which communicates new impulses to society, throws into circulation new and stirring thoughts, gives the mind a new consciousness of its faculties, and rouses and fortifies the will to an unconquerable purpose of well-doing. This spiritual power is worth all other. To improve man's outward condition is a secondary agency, and is chiefly important as it gives the means of inward growth. The most glorious minister of God on earth is he, who speaks with a life-giving energy to other minds, breathing into them the love of truth and virtue, strengthening them to suffer in a good cause, and lifting them above the senses and the world.

We know not a more exhilarating thought, than that this power is given to men; that we can not only change the face of the outward world, and by virtuous discipline improve ourselves, but that we may become

springs of life and light to our fellow-beings. We are thus admitted to a fellowship with Jesus Christ, whose highest end was, that he might act with a new and celestial energy on the human mind. We rejoice to think, that he did not come to monopolize this divine sway, to enjoy a solitary grandeur, but to receive others, even all who should obey his religion, into the partnership of this honor and happiness. Every Christian, in proportion to his progress, acquires a measure of this divine agency. In the humblest conditions, a power goes forth from a devout and disinterested spirit, calling forth silently moral and religious sentiment, perhaps in a child, or some other friend, and teaching, without the aid of words, the loveliness and peace of sincere and single-hearted virtue. In the more enlightened classes, individuals now and then rise up, who, through a singular force and elevation of soul, obtain a sway over men's minds to which no limit can be prescribed. They speak with a voice which is heard by distant nations, and which goes down to future ages. Their names are repeated with veneration by millions; and millions read in their lives and writings a quickening testimony to the greatness of the mind, to its moral strength, to the reality of disinterested virtue. These are the true sovereigns of the earth. They share in the royalty of Jesus Christ. They have a greatness which will be more and more felt. The time is coming, its signs are visible, when this long mistaken attribute of greatness will be seen to belong eminently, if not exclusively, to those, who, by their characters, deeds, sufferings, writings, leave imperishable and ennobling traces of themselves on the human mind. Among these legitimate sovereigns of

the world, will be ranked the philosopher, who penetrates the secrets of the universe, and of the soul; who opens new fields to the intellect; who gives it a new consciousness of its own powers, rights, and divine original; who spreads enlarged and liberal habits of thought; and who helps men to understand, that an ever-growing knowledge is the patrimony destined for them by the "Father of their spirits." Among them will be ranked the statesman, who, escaping a vulgar policy, rises to the discovery of the true interest of a state; who seeks without fear or favor the common good; who understands that a nation's mind is more valuable than its soil; who inspirits a people's enterprise, without making them the slaves of wealth; who is mainly anxious to originate or give stability to institutions by which society may be carried forward; who confides with a sublime constancy in justice and virtue, as the only foundation of a wise policy and of public prosperity; and, above all, who has so drunk into the spirit of Christ and of God, as never to forget, that his particular country is a member of the great human family, bound to all nations, by a common nature, by a common interest, and by indissoluble laws of equity and charity. Among these will be ranked, perhaps on the highest throne, the moral and religious Reformer, who truly merits that name; who rises above his times; who is moved by a holy impulse to assail vicious establishments, sustained by fierce passions and inveterate prejudices; who rescues great truths from the corruptions of ages; who, joining calm and deep thought to profound feeling, secures to religion at once enlightened and earnest conviction; who unfolds to men higher forms of virtue than they have yet attained or conceived;

who gives brighter and more thrilling views of the perfection for which they were framed, and inspires a victorious faith in the perpetual progress of our nature.

There is one characteristic of this power which belongs to truly great minds, particularly deserving notice. Far from enslaving, it makes more and more free, those on whom it is exercised; and in this respect it differs wholly from the vulgar sway which ambition thirsts for. It awakens a kindred power in others, calls their faculties into new life, and particularly strengthens them to follow their own deliberate convictions of truth and duty. It breathes conscious energy, self-respect, moral independence, and a scorn of every foreign yoke.

There is another power over men, very different from this; a power, not to quicken and elevate, but to crush and subdue; a power which robs men of the free use of their nature, takes them out of their own hands, and compels them to bend to another's will. This is the sway which men grasp at most eagerly, and which it is our great purpose to expose. To reign, to give laws, to clothe their own wills with omnipotence, to annihilate all other wills, to spoil the individual of that self-direction which is his most precious right, — this has ever been deemed by multitudes the highest prize for competition and conflict. The most envied men are those, who have succeeded in prostrating multitudes, in subjecting whole communities, to their single will. It is the love of this power, in all its forms, which we are anxious to hold up to reprobation. If any crime should be placed by society beyond pardon, it is this.

This power has been exerted most conspicuously and perniciously by two classes of men; the priest or minister of religion, and the civil ruler. Both rely on

the same instrument; that is, pain or terror; the first calling to his aid the fires and torments of the future world, and practising on the natural dread of invisible powers; and the latter availing himself of chains, dungeons, and gibbets in the present life. Through these terrible applications, man has, in all ages and in almost every country, been made, in a greater or less degree, a slave and machine; been shackled in all his faculties, and degraded into a tool of others' wills and passions. The influence of almost every political and religious institution has been to make man abject in mind, fearful, servile, a mechanical repeater of opinions which he dares not try, and a contributor of his toil, sweat, and blood, to governments which never dreamed of the general weal as their only legitimate end. On the immense majority of men, thus wronged and enslaved, the consciousness of their own nature has not yet dawned; and the doctrine, that each has a mind, worth more than the material world, and framed to grow for ever by a self-forming, self-directing energy, is still a secret, a mystery, notwithstanding the clear annunciation of it, ages ago, by Jesus Christ. We know not a stronger proof of the intenseness and nefariousness of the love of power, than the fact of its having virtually abrogated Christianity, and even turned into an engine of dominion, a revelation which breathes throughout the spirit of freedom, proclaims the essential equality of the human race, and directs its most solemn denunciations against the passion for rule and empire.

That this power, which consists in force and compulsion, in the imposition on the many of the will and judgment of one or a few, is of a low order, when

compared with the quickening influence over others, of which we have before spoken, we need not stop to prove. But the remark is less obvious, though not less true, that it is not only inferior in kind, but in amount or degree. This may not be so easily acknowledged. He, whose will is passively obeyed by a nation, or whose creed implicitly adopted by a spreading sect, may not easily believe, that his power is exceeded, not only in kind or quality, but in extent, by him who wields only the silent, subtile influence of moral and intellectual gifts. But the superiority of moral to arbitrary sway in this particular, is proved by its effects. Moral power is creative; arbitrary power wastes away the spirit and force of those on whom it is exerted. And is it not a mightier work to create than to destroy? A higher energy is required to quicken than to crush; to elevate than to depress; to warm and expand than to chill and contract. Any hand, even the weakest, may take away life; another agency is required to kindle or restore it. A vulgar incendiary may destroy in an hour a magnificent structure, the labor of ages. Has he energy to be compared with the creative intellect, in which this work had its origin? A fanatic of ordinary talent may send terror through a crowd; and by the craft, which is so often joined with fanaticism, may fasten on multitudes a debasing creed. Has he power to be compared with him, who rescues from darkness one only of these enslaved minds, and quickens it to think justly and nobly in relation to God, duty, and immortality? The energies of a single soul, awakened, by such an influence, to the free and full use of its powers, may surpass, in their progress, the intellectual activity of a whole community, enchained

and debased by fanaticism or outward force. Arbitrary power, whether civil or religious, if tried by the only fair test, that is, by its effects, seems to have more affinity with weakness than strength. It enfeebles and narrows what it acts upon. Its efficiency resembles that of darkness and cold in the natural world. True power is vivifying, productive, builds up, and gives strength. We have a noble type and manifestation of it in the sun, which calls forth and diffuses motion, life, energy, and beauty. He who succeeds in chaining men's understandings, and breaking their wills, may indeed number millions as his subjects. But a weak, puny race are the products of his sway, and they can only reach the stature and force of men by throwing off his yoke. He who, by an intellectual and moral energy, awakens kindred energy in others, touches springs of infinite might, gives impulse to faculties to which no bounds can be prescribed, begins an action which will never end. One great and kindling thought from a retired and obscure man, may live when thrones are fallen, and the memory of those who filled them obliterated, and, like an undying fire, may illuminate and quicken all future generations.

We have spoken of the inferiority and worthlessness of that dominion over others, which has been coveted so greedily in all ages. We should rejoice could we convey some just idea of its moral turpitude. Of all injuries and crimes, the most flagrant is chargeable on him who aims to establish dominion over his brethren. He wars with what is more precious than life. He would rob men of their chief prerogative and glory; we mean, of self-dominion, of that empire which is given to a rational and moral being over his own soul and his

own life. Such a being is framed to find honor and happiness in forming and swaying himself, in adopting as his supreme standard his convictions of truth and duty, in unfolding his powers by free exertion, in acting from a principle within, from his growing conscience. His proper and noblest attributes are self-government, self-reverence, energy of thought, energy in choosing the right and the good, energy in casting off all other dominion. He was created for empire in his own breast, and woe, woe to them who would pluck from him this sceptre! A mind, inspired by God with reason and conscience, and capable, through these endowments, of progress in truth and duty, is a sacred thing; more sacred than temples made with hands, or even than this outward universe. It is of nobler lineage than that of which human aristocracy makes its boast. It bears the lineaments of a Divine Parent. It has not only a physical, but moral connexion with the Supreme Being. Through its self-determining power, it is accountable for its deeds, and for whatever it becomes. Responsibility, that which above all things makes existence solemn, is laid upon it. Its great end is to conform itself, by its own energy, and by spiritual succours which its own prayers and faithfulness secure, to that perfection of wisdom and goodness, of which God is the original and source, which shines upon us from the whole outward world, but of which the intelligent soul is a truer recipient and a brighter image, even than the sun with all his splendors. From these views we learn, that no outrage, no injury, can equal that, which is perpetrated by him, who would break down and subjugate the human mind; who would rob men of self-reverence; who would bring them to stand

more in awe of outward authority, than of reason and conscience in their own souls; who would make himself a standard and law for his race, and shape, by force or terror, the free spirits of others after his own judgment and will.

All excellence, whether intellectual or moral, involves, as its essential elements, freedom, energy, and moral independence, so that the invader of these, whether from the throne or the pulpit, invades the most sacred interest of the human race. Intellectual excellence implies and requires these. This does not consist in passive assent even to the highest truths; or in the most extensive stores of knowledge acquired by an implicit faith, and lodged in the inert memory. It lies in force, freshness, and independence of thought; and is most conspicuously manifested by him, who, loving truth supremely, seeks it resolutely, follows the light without fear, and modifies the views of others by the patient, strenuous exercise of his own faculties. To a man thus intellectually free, truth is not, what it is to passive multitudes, a foreign substance, dormant, lifeless, fruitless, but penetrating, prolific, full of vitality, and ministering to the health and expansion of the soul. And what we have said of intellectual excellence is still more true of moral. This has its foundation and root in freedom, and cannot exist a moment without it. The very idea of virtue is, that it is a free act, the product or result of the mind's self-determining power. It is not good feeling, infused by nature or caught by sympathy; nor is it good conduct into which we have slidden through imitation, or which has been forced upon us by another's will. We ourselves are its authors in a high and peculiar sense. We indeed depend on

God for virtue; for our capacity of moral action is wholly his gift and inspiration, and without his perpetual aid this capacity would avail nothing. But his aid is not compulsion. He respects, he cannot violate, that moral freedom which is his richest gift. To the individual, the decision of his own character is left. He has more than kingly power in his own soul. Let him never resign it. Let none dare to interfere with it. Virtue is self-dominion, or, what is the same thing, it is self-subjection to the principle of duty, that highest law in the soul. If these views of intellectual and moral excellence be just, then to invade men's freedom is to aim the deadliest blow at their honor and happiness; and their worst foe is he who fetters their reason, who makes his will their law, who makes them tools, echoes, copies of himself.

Perhaps it may be objected to the representation of virtue as consisting in self-dominion, that the Scriptures speak of it as consisting in obedience to God. But these are perfectly compatible and harmonious views; for genuine obedience to God is the free choice and adoption of a law, the great principles of which our own minds approve, and our own consciences bind on us; which is not an arbitrary injunction, but an emanation and expression of the Divine Mind; and which is intended throughout to give energy, dignity, and enlargement to our best powers. He, and he only, obeys God virtuously and acceptably, who reverences right, not power; who has chosen rectitude as his supreme rule; who sees and reveres in God the fulness and brightness of moral excellence, and who sees in obedience the progress and perfection of his own nature. That subjection to the Deity, which, we fear, is too

common, in which the mind surrenders itself to mere power and will, is any thing but virtue. We fear that it is disloyalty to that moral principle, which is ever to be reverenced as God's vicegerent in the rational soul.

Perhaps some may fear, that, in our zeal for the freedom and independence of the individual mind, we unsettle government, and almost imply that it is a wrong. Far from it. We hold government to be an essential means of our intellectual and moral education, and would strengthen it by pointing out its legitimate functions. Government, as far as it is rightful, is the guardian and friend of freedom, so that in exalting the one we enforce the other. The highest aim of all authority is to confer liberty. This is true of domestic rule. The great, we may say the single object of parental government, of a wise and virtuous education, is, to give the child the fullest use of his own powers; to give him inward force; to train him up to govern himself. The same is true of the authority of Jesus Christ. He came, indeed, to rule mankind; but to rule them, not by arbitrary statutes, not by force and menace, not by mere will, but by setting before them, in precept and life, those everlasting rules of rectitude, which Heaven obeys, and of which every soul contains the living germs. He came to exert a moral power; to reign by the manifestation of celestial virtues; to awaken the energy of holy purpose in the free mind. He came to publish liberty to the captives; to open the prison door; to break the power of the passions; to break the yoke of a ceremonial religion which had been imposed in the childhood of the race; to exalt us to a manly homage and obedience of our Creator. Of civil government, too, the great end is to secure freedom. Its

proper, and highest function is, to watch over the liberties of each and all, and to open to a community the widest field for all its powers. Its very chains and prisons have the general freedom for their aim. They are just, only when used to curb oppression and wrong; to disarm him who has a tyrant's heart, if not a tyrant's power, who wars against others' rights, who, by invading property or life, would substitute force for the reign of equal laws. Freedom, we repeat it, is the end of government. To exalt men to self-rule is the end of all other rule; and he, who would fasten on them his arbitrary will, is their worst foe.

We have aimed to show the guilt of the love of power and dominion, by showing the ruin which it brings on the mind, by enlarging on the preciousness of that inward freedom which it invades and destroys. To us, this view is the most impressive; but the guilt of this passion may also be discerned, and by some more clearly, in its outward influences; in the desolation, bloodshed, and woe, of which it is the perpetual cause. We owe to it almost all the miseries of war. To spread the sway of one or a few, thousands and millions have been turned into machines under the name of soldiers, armed with instruments of destruction, and then sent to reduce others to their own lot by fear and pain, by fire and sword, by butchery and pillage. And is it light guilt, to array man against his brother; to make murder the trade of thousands; to drench the earth with human blood; to turn it into a desert; to scatter families like chaff; to make mothers widows, and children orphans; and to do all this for the purpose of spreading a still gloomier desolation, for the purpose of subjugating men's souls, turning them into base para-

sites, extorting from them a degrading homage, humbling them in their own eyes, and breaking them to servility as the chief duty of life? When the passion for power succeeds, as it generally has done, in establishing despotism, it seems to make even civilization a doubtful good. Whilst the monarch and his court are abandoned to a wasteful luxury, the peasantry, rooted to the soil and doomed to a perpetual round of labors, are raised but little above the brute. There are parts of Europe, Christian Europe, in which the peasant, through whose sweat kings and nobles riot in plenty, seems to enjoy less, on the whole, than the untamed Indian of our forests. Chained to one spot, living on the cheapest vegetables, sometimes unable to buy salt to season his coarse fare, seldom or never tasting animal food, having for his shelter a mud-walled hut floored with earth or stone, and subjected equally with the brute to the rule of a superior, he seems to us to partake less of animal, intellectual, and moral pleasures, than the free wanderer of the woods, whose steps no man fetters; whose wigwam no tyrant violates; whose chief toil is hunting, that noblest of sports; who feasts on the deer, that most luxurious of viands; to whom streams, as well as woods, pay tribute; whose adventurous life gives sagacity; and in whom peril nourishes courage and self-command. We are no advocates for savage life. We know that its boasted freedom is a delusion. The single fact, that human nature in this wild state makes no progress, is proof enough that it wants true liberty. We mean only to say, that man, in the hands of despotism, is sometimes degraded below the savage; that it were better for him to be lawless, then to live under lawless sway.

It is the part of Christians to look on the passion for power and dominion with strong abhorrence; for it is singularly hostile to the genius of their religion. Jesus Christ always condemned it. One of the striking marks of his moral greatness, and of the originality of his character, was, that he held no fellowship and made no compromise with this universal spirit of his age, but withstood it in every form. He found the Jews intoxicating themselves with dreams of empire. Of the prophecies relating to the Messiah, the most familiar and dear to them were those, which announced him as a conqueror, and which were construed by their worldliness into a promise of triumphs to the people from whom he was to spring. Even the chosen disciples of Jesus looked to him for this good. "To sit on his right hand and on his left," or, in other words, to hold the most commanding station in his kingdom, was not only their lurking wish, but their open and importunate request. But there was no passion on which Jesus frowned more severely than on this. He taught, that, to be great in his kingdom, men must serve, instead of ruling, their brethren. He placed among them a child as an emblem of the humility of his religion. His most terrible rebukes fell on the lordly, aspiring Pharisee. In his own person, he was mild and condescending, exacting no personal service, living with his disciples as a friend, sharing their wants, sleeping in their fishing-boat, and even washing their feet; and in all this, he expressly proposed himself to them as a pattern, knowing well, that the last triumph of disinterestedness is to forget our own superiority, in our sympathy, solicitude, tenderness, respect, and self-denying zeal for those who are below us. We cannot indeed wonder

that the lust of power should be encountered by the sternest rebukes and menace of Christianity, because it wages open war with the great end of this religion, which is the elevation of the human mind. No corruption of this religion is more palpable and more enormous, than that which turns it into an instrument of dominion, and which makes it teach, that man's primary duty is to give himself a passive material into the hands of his minister, priest, or king.

The subject which we now discuss is one in which all nations have an interest, and especially our own; and we should fail of our main purpose, were we not to lead our readers to apply it to ourselves. The passion for ruling, though most completely developed in despotisms, is confined to no forms of government. It is the chief peril of free states, the natural enemy of free institutions. It agitates our own country, and still throws an uncertainty over the great experiment we are making here in behalf of liberty. We will try then, in a few words, to expose its influences and dangers, and to abate that zeal with which a participation in office and power is sought among ourselves.

It is the distinction of republican institutions, that whilst they compel the passion for power to moderate its pretensions, and to satisfy itself with more limited gratifications, they tend to spread it more widely through the community, and to make it a universal principle. The doors of office being open to all, crowds burn to rush in. A thousand hands are stretched out to grasp the reins which are denied to none. Perhaps, in this boasted and boasting land of liberty, not a few, if called to state the chief good of a republic, would place it in this; that every man is eligible to every

office, and that the highest places of power and trust are prizes for universal competition. The superiority attributed by many to our institutions is, not that they secure the greatest freedom, but give every man a chance of ruling; not that they reduce the power of government within the narrowest limits which the safety of the state admits, but throw it into as many hands as possible. The despot's great crime is thought to be, that he keeps the delight of dominion to himself, that he makes a monopoly of it, whilst our more generous institutions, by breaking it into parcels, and inviting the multitude to scramble for it, spread this joy more widely. The result is, that political ambition infects our country, and generates a feverish restlessness and discontent, which, to the monarchist, may seem more than a balance for our forms of liberty. The spirit of intrigue, which in absolute governments is confined to courts, walks abroad through the land; and, as individuals can accomplish no political purposes single-handed, they band themselves into parties, ostensibly framed for public ends, but aiming only at the acquisition of power. The nominal sovereign, that is, the people, like all other sovereigns, is courted and flattered, and told that it can do no wrong. Its pride is pampered, its passions inflamed, its prejudices made inveterate. Such are the processes, by which other republics have been subverted, and he must be blind who cannot trace them among ourselves. We mean not to exaggerate our dangers. We rejoice to know, that the improvements of society oppose many checks to the love of power. But every wise man, who sees its workings, must dread it as our chief foe.

This passion derives strength and vehemence in our

country from the common idea, that political power is the highest prize which society has to offer. We know not a more general delusion, nor is it the least dangerous. Instilled, as it is, in our youth, it gives infinite excitement to political ambition. It turns the active talent of the country to public station as the supreme good, and makes it restless, intriguing, and unprincipled. It calls out hosts of selfish competitors for comparatively few places, and encourages a bold, unblushing pursuit of personal elevation, which a just moral sense and self-respect in the community would frown upon and cover with shame. This prejudice has come down from past ages, and is one of their worst bequests. To govern others has always been thought the highest function on earth. We have a remarkable proof of the strength and pernicious influence of this persuasion, in the manner in which history has been written. Who fill the page of history? Political and military leaders, who have lived for one end, to subdue and govern their fellow-beings. These occupy the foreground, and the people, the human race, dwindle into insignificance, and are almost lost behind their masters. The proper and noblest object of history is, to record the vicissitudes of society, its spirit in different ages, the causes which have determined its progress and decline, and especially the manifestations and growth of its highest attributes and interests, of intelligence, of the religious principle, of moral sentiment, of the elegant and useful arts, of the triumphs of man over nature and himself. Instead of this, we have records of men in power, often weak, oftener wicked, who did little or nothing for the advancement of their age, who were in no sense its representatives, whom the accident

of birth perhaps raised to influence. We have the quarrels of courtiers, the intrigues of cabinets, sieges and battles, royal births and deaths, and the secrets of a palace, that sink of lewdness and corruption. These are the staples of history. The inventions of printing, of gunpowder, and the mariner's compass, were too mean affairs for history to trace. She was bowing before kings and warriors. She had volumes for the plots and quarrels of Leicester and Essex in the reign of Elizabeth, but not a page for Shakspeare; and if Bacon had not filled an office, she would hardly have recorded his name, in her anxiety to preserve the deeds and sayings of that Solomon of his age, James the First.

We have spoken of the supreme importance which is attached to rulers and government, as a prejudice; and we think, that something may be done towards abating the passion for power, by placing this thought in a clearer light. It seems to us not very difficult to show, that to govern men is not as high a sphere of action as has been commonly supposed, and that those, who have obtained this dignity, have usurped a place beyond their due in history and men's minds. We apprehend, indeed, that we are not alone in this opinion; that a change of sentiment on this subject has commenced and must go on; that men are learning, that there are higher sources of happiness and more important agents in human affairs than political rule. It is one mark of the progress of society, that it brings down the public man and raises the private one. It throws power into the hands of untitled individuals, and spreads it through all orders of the community. It multiplies and distributes freely means of extensive influence, and opens

new channels, by which the gifted mind, in whatever rank or condition, may communicate itself far and wide. Through the diffusion of education and printing, a private man may now speak to multitudes, incomparably more numerous than ancient or modern eloquence ever electrified in the popular assembly or the hall of legislation. By these instruments, truth is asserting her sovereignty over nations, without the help of rank, office, or sword; and her faithful ministers will become more and more the lawgivers of the world.

We mean not to deny, we steadily affirm, that government is a great good, and essential to human happiness; but it does its good chiefly by a negative influence, by repressing injustice and crime, by securing property from invasion, and thus removing obstructions to the free exercise of human powers. It confers little positive benefit. Its office is, not to confer happiness, but to give men opportunity to work out happiness for themselves. Government resembles the wall which surrounds our lands; a needful protection, but rearing no harvests, ripening no fruits. It is the individual who must choose whether the enclosure shall be a paradise or a waste. How little positive good can government confer! It does not till our fields, build our houses, weave the ties which bind us to our families, give disinterestedness to the heart, or energy to the intellect and will. All our great interests are left to ourselves; and governments, when they have interfered with them, have obstructed, much more than advanced them. For example, they have taken religion into their keeping only to disfigure it. So education, in their hands, has generally become a propagator of servile maxims, and an upholder of antiquated errors. In like

manner they have paralyzed trade by their nursing care, and multiplied poverty by expedients for its relief. Government has almost always been a barrier against which intellect has had to struggle; and society has made its chief progress by the minds of private individuals, who have outstripped their rulers, and gradually shamed them into truth and wisdom.

Virtue and intelligence are the great interests of a community, including all others, and worth all others; and the noblest agency is that by which they are advanced. Now we apprehend, that political power is not the most effectual instrument for their promotion, and accordingly we doubt whether government is the only or highest sphere for superior minds. Virtue, from its very nature, cannot be a product of what may be called the direct operation of government; that is, of legislation. Laws may repress crime. Their office is to erect prisons for violence and fraud. But moral and religious worth, dignity of character, loftiness of sentiment, all that makes man a blessing to himself and society, lies beyond their province. Virtue is of the soul, where laws cannot penetrate. Excellence is something too refined, spiritual, celestial, to be produced by the coarse machinery of government. Human legislation addresses itself to self-love, and works by outward force. Its chief instrument is punishment. It cannot touch the springs of virtuous feelings, of great and good deeds. Accordingly, rulers, with all their imagined omnipotence, do not dream of enjoining by statute, philanthropy, gratitude, devout sentiment, magnanimity, and purity of thought. Virtue is too high a concern for government. It is an inspiration of God, not a creature of law; and the agents whom God chiefly

honors in its promotion, are those, who, through experience as well as meditation, have risen to generous conceptions of it, and who show it forth, not in empty eulogies, but in the language of deep conviction, and in lives of purity.

Government, then, does little to advance the chief interest of human nature by its direct agency; and what shall we say of its indirect? Here we wish not to offend; but we must be allowed to use that plainness of speech which becomes Christians and freemen. We do fear then, that the indirect influence of government is on the whole adverse to virtue; and in saying this, we do not speak of other countries, or of different political institutions from our own. We do not mean to say, what all around us would echo, that monarchy corrupts a state, that the air of a court reeks with infection, and taints the higher classes with a licentiousness which descends to their inferiors. We speak of government at home; and we ask wise men to say, whether it ministers most to vice or virtue. We fear, that here, as elsewhere, political power is of corrupting tendency; and that, generally speaking, public men are not the most effectual teachers of truth, disinterestedness, and incorruptible integrity to the people. An error prevails in relation to political concerns, which necessarily makes civil institutions demoralizing. It is deeply rooted, the growth of ages. We refer to the belief, that public men are absolved in a measure from the everlasting and immutable obligations of morality; that political power is a prize, which justifies arts and compliances that would be scorned in private life; that management, intrigue, hollow pretensions, and appeals to base passions, deserve slight rebuke when

employed to compass political ends. Accordingly the laws of truth, justice, and philanthropy, have seldom been applied to public as to private concerns. Even those individuals, who have come to frown indignantly on the machinations, the office seeking, and the sacrifices to popularity, which disgrace our internal condition, are disposed to acquiesce in a crooked or ungenerous policy towards foreign nations, by which great advantages may accrue to their own country. Now the great truth, on which the cause of virtue rests, is, that rectitude is an eternal, unalterable, and universal law, binding at once heaven and earth, the perfection of God's character, and the harmony and happiness of the rational creation; and in proportion as political institutions unsettle this great conviction, — in proportion as they teach that truth, justice, and philanthropy are local, partial obligations, claiming homage from the weak, but shrinking before the powerful, — in proportion as they thus insult the awful and inviolable majesty of the Eternal Law, — in the same proportion they undermine the very foundation of a people's virtue.

In regard to the other great interest of the community, its intelligence, government may do much good by a direct influence; that is, by instituting schools or appropriating revenue for the instruction of the poorer classes. Whether it would do wisely in assuming to itself, or in taking from individuals, the provision and care of higher literary institutions, is a question not easily determined. But no one will doubt, that it is a noble function, to assist and develope the intellect in those classes of the community, whose hard condition exposes them to a merely animal existence. Still the agency of government in regard to knowledge is ne-

cessarily superficial and narrow. The great sources of intellectual power and progress to a people are its strong and original thinkers, be they found where they may. Government cannot, and does not, extend the bounds of knowledge; cannot make experiments in the laboratory, explore the laws of animal or vegetable nature, or establish the principles of criticism, morals, and religion. The energy, which is to carry forward the intellect of a people, belongs chiefly to private individuals, who devote themselves to lonely thought, who worship truth, who originate the views demanded by their age, who help us to throw off the yoke of established prejudices, who improve old modes of education or invent better. It is true that great men at the head of affairs may, and often do, contribute much to the growth of a nation's mind. But it too often happens that their station obstructs rather than aids their usefulness. Their connexion with a party, and the habit of viewing subjects in reference to personal aggrandizement, too often obscure the noblest intellects, and convert into patrons of narrow views and temporary interests, those, who, in other conditions, would have been the lights of their age, and the propagators of everlasting truth. — From these views of the limited influence of government on the most precious interests of society, we learn that political power is not the noblest power, and that, in the progress of intelligence, it will cease to be coveted as the chief and most honorable distinction on earth.

If we pass now to the consideration of that interest, over which government is expected chiefly to watch, and on which it is most competent to act with power, we shall not arrive at a result very different from what

we have just expressed. We refer to property, or wealth. That the influence of political institutions on this great concern is important, inestimable, we mean not to deny. But, as we have already suggested, it is chiefly negative. Government enriches a people by removing obstructions to their powers, by defending them from wrong, and thus giving them opportunity to enrich themselves. Government is not the spring of the wealth of nations, but their own sagacity, industry, enterprise, and force of character. To leave a people to themselves, is generally the best service their rulers can render. Time was, when sovereigns fixed prices and wages, regulated industry and expense, and imagined that a nation would starve and perish, if it were not guided and guarded like an infant. But we have learned, that men are their own best guardians, that property is safest under its owner's care, and that, generally speaking, even great enterprises can better be accomplished by the voluntary association of individuals, than by the state. Indeed, we are met at every stage of this discussion by the truth, that political power is a weak engine compared with *individual* intelligence, virtue and effort; and we are the more anxious to enforce this truth, because, through an extravagant estimate of government, men are apt to expect from it what they must do for themselves, and to throw upon it the blame which belongs to their own feebleness and improvidence. The great hope of society is individual character. Civilization and political institutions are themselves sources of not a few evils, which nothing but the intellectual and moral energy of the private citizen can avert or relieve. Such, for example, are the monstrous inequalities of property, the

sad contrasts of condition, which disfigure a large city ; which laws create and cannot remove ; which can only be mitigated and diminished by a principle of moral restraint in the poorer classes, and by a wise beneficence in the rich. The great lesson for men to learn is, that their happiness is in their own hands ; that it is to be wrought out by their own faithfulness to God and conscience ; that no outward institutions can supply the place of inward principle, of moral energy, whilst this can go far to supply the place of almost every outward aid.

Our remarks will show, that our estimate of political institutions is more moderate than the prevalent one, and that we regard the power, for which ambition has woven so many plots and shed so much blood, as destined to occupy a more and more narrow space, among the means of usefulness and distinction. There is, however, one branch of government, which we hold in high veneration, which we account an unspeakable blessing, and which, for the world, we would not say a word to disparage ; and we are the more disposed to speak of it, because its relative importance seems to us little understood. We refer to the Judiciary, a department worth all others in the state. Whilst politicians expend their zeal on transient interests, which perhaps derive their chief importance from their connexion with a party, it is the province of the Judge to apply those solemn and universal laws of rectitude, on which the security, industry, and prosperity of the individual and the state essentially depend. From his tribunal, as from a sacred oracle, go forth the responses of justice. To us there is nothing in the whole fabric of civil institutions so interesting and imposing, as this impartial

and authoritative exposition of the principles of moral legislation. The administration of justice in this country, where the Judge, without a guard, without a soldier, without pomp, decides upon the dearest interests of the citizen, trusting chiefly to the moral sentiment of the community for the execution of his decrees, is the most beautiful and encouraging aspect, under which our government can be viewed. We repeat it, there is nothing in public affairs so venerable as the voice of Justice, speaking through her delegated ministers, reaching and subduing the high as well as the low, setting a defence around the splendid mansion of wealth and the lowly hut of poverty, repressing wrong, vindicating innocence, humbling the oppressor, and publishing the rights of human nature to every human being. We confess, that we often turn with pain and humiliation from the hall of Congress, where we see the legislator forgetting the majesty of his function, forgetting his relation to a vast and growing community, and sacrificing to his party or to himself the public weal; and it comforts us to turn to the court of justice, where the dispenser of the laws, shutting his ear against all solicitations of friendship or interest, dissolving for a time every private tie, forgetting public opinion, and withstanding public feeling, asks only what is RIGHT. To our courts, the resorts and refuge of weakness and innocence, we look with hope and joy. We boast, with a virtuous pride, that no breath of corruption has as yet tainted their pure air. To this department of government, we cannot ascribe too much importance. Over this, we cannot watch too jealously. Every encroachment on its independence we should resent, and repel, as the chief wrong our country can sustain.

Woe, woe to the impious hand, which would shake this most sacred and precious column of the social edifice.

In the remarks which we have now submitted to our readers, we have treated of great topics, if not worthily, yet, we trust, with a pure purpose. We have aimed to expose the passion for dominion, the desire of ruling mankind. We have labored to show the superiority of moral power and influence to that sway which has for ages been seized with eager and bloody hands. We have labored to hold up to unmeasured reprobation, him who would establish an empire of brute force over rational beings. We have labored to hold forth, as the enemy of his race, the man, who, in any way, would fetter the human mind, and subject other wills to his own. In a word, we have desired to awaken others and ourselves to a just self-reverence, to the free use and expansion of our highest powers, and especially to that moral force, that energy of holy, virtuous purpose, without which we are slaves amidst the freest institutions. Better gifts than these we cannot supplicate from God; nor can we consecrate our lives to nobler acquisitions.

# REMARKS

## ON THE CHARACTER AND WRITINGS

OF

# FENELON.

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SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS OF FENELON; with an Appendix, containing a Memoir of his Life. By a LADY. Boston: Hilliard, Gray, Little, and Wilkins. 1829.

WE perform a very gratifying duty, in introducing and recommending to our readers the book which stands at the head of this article. An attractive and quickening work on practical religion we regard as a valuable accession to our literature. Indeed any thing written with power on Christian morals and theology is most welcome. It is too true, and a sad truth, that religious books are preëminently dull. If we wished to impoverish a man's intellect, we could devise few means more effectual, than to confine him to what is called a course of theological reading. The very subject, to which, above all others, the writer should bring his whole strength of thought and feeling, which allies itself to our noblest faculties, to which reason, imagination, taste, and genius should consecrate their noblest efforts, is of all subjects treated most weakly, tamely,

and with least attraction. Of course there are splendid exceptions, but we speak of the immense majority of theological books. It is wonderful how men can think and write upon religion to so little effect. That a theme so vast, so sublime as Christianity, embracing God and man, earth and heaven, time and eternity, connected intimately with all human history, deriving lights from all human experience, admitting application to the whole of human life, and proposing as its great end the everlasting progress of the soul, — that such a subject should be treated so monotonously as to be proverbially dull, that its professed explorers should be able to plant their footsteps so exactly in the track of their predecessors, that the boundlessness of the field should so seldom tempt an adventurous spirit from the beaten way, is wonderful, and might seem a miracle to a man unacquainted with the vassalage which has broken down the mind in the department of religion. It is true, that those who write on this topic are accustomed to call it sublime; but they make its sublimity cold and barren, like that of mountain-tops wrapped in everlasting snows. We write this, not in severity, but in sorrow of heart; for we despair of any great progress of the human character or of society, until the energies of the mind shall be bent, as they seldom have been, on those most important subjects and interests of the human mind, morals and religion.

As a striking proof of the poverty of religious literature, and of the general barrenness of the intellect when employed in this field, we may refer to the small amount of original and productive thought in the English Church since the days of Barrow and Taylor. Could our voice be heard in England, we would ask impartial

and gifted men, more familiar with their country's history than ourselves, to solve the problem, how a Protestant Establishment, so munificently endowed with the means of improvement, should have done so little, in so long a period, for Christianity, should have produced so few books to interest the higher order of minds. Let not these remarks be misunderstood, as if we were wanting in respect and gratitude to a church, which, with all its defects, has been the bulwark of Protestantism, which has been illustrated by the piety and virtues of such men as Bishops Wilson, Berkeley, and Heber, and in which have sprung up so many institutions, consecrated to humanity, and to the diffusion of the Christian faith. We mean not to deny it the honor of having fostered talent in various forms and directions. Among the English clergy we find profound and elegant scholars; we find the names of those giants in ancient learning, Bentley and Parr, and a crowd of proficients in polite literature, of whom Hurd and Jortin are honorable representatives. We speak only of the deficiency of their contributions to moral and religious science. With the exception of Clarke and Butler, we could not easily name any of the Establishment, since the time above specified, who have decidedly carried forward the human intellect. The latter of these is indeed a great name, notwithstanding the alleged obscurities of his style, and worthy to be enrolled among the master-spirits of the human race. In regard to commentators, whose function, as commonly executed, holds a second rank in theology, the English Church, since the time of Hammond, has produced none of much value, except Bishop Pearce. We presume that she will not lay claim to the heretical

Locke, who carried into the interpretation of the Scriptures the same force of thought, as into the philosophy of the mind ; or to Whitby, whose strenuous Arminianism, as Orthodoxy would reproachingly say, tapered off into that most suspicious form of Christianity, Unitarianism. We have not yet named two of the most illustrious intellectual chiefs of the church, Warburton and Horsley. Their great powers we most readily own ; but Warburton is generally acknowledged to have wasted his mind, and has left no impression of himself on later times ; whilst Horsley, though he has given us striking, if not judicious, sermons, in a style of unusual vigor, cannot be said to have communicated, in any respect, a new impulse to thought, and in Biblical criticism, to which he was zealously devoted, he is one of the last authorities on which a sound mind would lean. To Bishops Lowth and Sherlock we cheerfully acknowledge our obligations ; and we question whether the latter has even yet received his due praise. We have not forgotten, though we have not named, Tillotson, Secker, and Porteus. They are all worthy of remembrance, especially Secker, the clear and wise expounder of Christian ethics ; but they added little or nothing to the stock which they received. It may be thought, that we have not been just to the Establishment, in passing over Paley. He has our sincere admiration. On one great topic, which indeed has been worthily treated by many of the clergy, we mean that of Christian evidence, he has shed new light. By felicity of arrangement and illustration, he has given an air of novelty to old arguments, whilst he has strengthened his cause by important original proofs. His *Horæ Paulinæ* is one of the few books destined to live. Paley saw what he did

see, through an atmosphere of light. He seized on the strong points of his subject with an intuitive sagacity, and has given his clear, bright thoughts, in a style which has made them the property of his readers almost as perfectly as they were his own. In what then did he fail? We have said, that he was characterized by the distinctness of his vision. He was not, we think, equally remarkable for its extent. He was popular, rather than philosophical. He was deficient in that intellectual thirst, which is a chief element of the philosophical spirit. He had no irrepressible desire to sound the depths of his own nature, or to ascend to wide and all-reconciling views of the works and ways of God. Moral philosophy he carried backward; nor had he higher claims in religious, than in ethical science. His sermons are worthy of all praise, not indeed for their power over the heart, but for their plain and strong expositions of duty, and their awakening appeals to the conscience.

We leave this topic with observing, that, in the noblest branch of history, we mean Christian or ecclesiastical history, the English Church has not furnished a single distinguished name. We have one mournful and decisive proof of this deficiency. The vast majority of English readers learn what they know of the progress and fortunes of their religion, from its foe and insulter, from Gibbon, the apostle of unbelief. The history of Christianity, the most important and sublime theme in this province of literature, has as yet found no writer to do it justice, none to be compared with the great names in civil history. The mightiest revolution in the records of our race remains to be worthily told. We doubt, indeed, whether the true character, style,

and extent of the work which is needed, are as yet comprehended. That the same rigorous impartiality, the same spirit of philosophical research into causes and effects, is to be carried into religious as into civil history, is imperfectly understood. The records of particular sects and churches, instead of exhausting this great subject, are perhaps subordinate parts. We want to know the great conflict between Christianity and Heathenism, and the action and reaction of these systems on one another. We want to know the influences of Christianity on society, politics, manners, philosophy, and literature, and the modifications which it has received in return from all these mighty agents. We know not where history can find a nobler field for its graphic powers, than in the chivalrous ages of Christianity; nor can it find, in its whole range over the past, a subject so fitted, as the spread and fortunes of this religion, to its great end, which is, to throw light on the nature and powers of man, and to carry us deep into the human soul. When is this greatest and most lamentable chasm in our literature to be supplied?

We have cited the English Church as a proof of the unproductiveness of the intellect in religion, and of the barrenness of theological literature. Had we time we might find corroborations in other sects. In truth, a paralyzing influence has been working mightily for ages in the Christian world, and we ought not to wonder at its results. Free action has been denied to the mind, and freedom is an essential condition of growth and power. A fettered limb moves slowly and operates feebly. The spirit pines away in a prison; and yet to rear prison-walls round the mind has been the chief toil of ages. The mischiefs of this intellectual bond

age are as yet, we conceive, but imperfectly known, and need to be set forth with a new eloquence. If, as we believe, progress be the supreme law of the soul and the very aim of its creation, then no wrong can be inflicted on it so grievous, as to bind it down everlastingly to a fixed, unvarying creed, especially if this creed was framed in an age of darkness, crime, and political and religious strife. This tyranny is pre-eminently treason against human nature. If growth be the supreme law and purpose of the mind, then the very truth, which was suited to one age, may, if made the limit of future ones, become a positive evil; just as the garment, in which childhood sports with ease and joy, would irritate and deform the enlarging frame. God, having framed the soul for expansion, has placed it in the midst of an unlimited universe to receive fresh impulses and impressions without end; and man, "dressed in a little brief authority," would sever it from this sublime connexion, and would shape it after his own ignorance or narrow views. The effects are as necessary as they are mournful. The mind, in proportion as it is cut off from free communication with nature, with revelation, with God, with itself, loses its life, just as the body droops, when debarred from the fresh air and the cheering light of heaven. Its vision is contracted, its energies blighted, its movement constrained. It finds health only in action. It is perfect, only in as far as it is self-formed. — Let us not be misapprehended. We mean not to deny that the mind needs the aid of human instruction, from the cradle to the grave; but this it needs as a material to act upon, and not as a lesson to be mechanically learned. The great aim of instruction should be to give the mind the

consciousness and free use of its own powers. The less of instruction the better, if it only propose to engender a slavish dependence and an inert faith. The soul often owes its best acquisitions to itself. They come to it from glimpses of its own nature which it cannot trace to human teaching, from the whispers of a divine voice, from stirrings and aspirations of its own unfolding and unbounded energies, from the indistinct dawning of new truths, or from the sudden brightening of old truths, which, if left to act freely, work a mighty revolution within. Against these inspirations, if so they may be called, which belong to the individual, and which are perpetually bursting the limits of received ideas, the spirit of religious tyranny wages its chief and most unrelenting war. It dreads nothing so much as a mind, in which these diviner motions manifest themselves in power. That it should have so succeeded in checking and stifling them, is one of the very mournful reflections forced on us by human history. We have here one great cause of the sterility of theological literature. Religion, by being imposed as a yoke, has subdued the faculties, which it was meant to quicken; and, what is most worthy of remark, like all other yokes, it has often excited a mad resistance, which has sought compensation for past restraints in licentiousness, and disgraced the holy name of freedom, by attaching it to impiety and shameless excess.

A great subject has led us far from our author. We return to him with pleasure. We welcome, as we have said, a book from Fenelon; and we do so, because, if not a profound, he was an original thinker, and because, though a Catholic, he was essentially free. He wrote from his own mind, and seldom has a purer mind taber-

nacled in flesh. He professed to believe in an infallible church; but he listened habitually to the voice of God within him, and speaks of this in language so strong, as to have given the Quakers some plea for ranking him among themselves. So little did he confine himself to established notions, that he drew upon himself the censures of his church, and, like some other Christians whom we could name, has even been charged with a refined Deism. His works have the great charm of coming fresh from the soul. He wrote from experience, and hence, though he often speaks a language which must seem almost a foreign one to men of the world, yet he always speaks in a tone of reality. That he has excesses we mean not to deny; but they are of a kind which we regard with more than indulgence, almost with admiration. Common fanaticism we cannot away with; for it is essentially vulgar, the working of animal passions, sometimes of sexual love, and oftener of earthly ambition. But when a pure mind errs, by aspiring after a disinterestedness and purity not granted to our present infant state, we almost reverence its errors; and still more, we recognise in them an essential truth. They only anticipate and claim too speedily the good for which man was made. They are the misapprehensions of the inspired prophet, who hopes to see in his own day, what he was appointed to promise to remoter ages.

Fenelon saw far into the human heart, and especially into the lurkings of self-love. He looked with a piercing eye through the disguises of sin. But he knew sin, not, as most men do, by bitter experience of its power, so much as by his knowledge and experience of virtue. Deformity was revealed to him by his refined percep-

tions and intense love of moral beauty. The light, which he carried with him into the dark corners of the human heart, and by which he laid open its most hidden guilt, was that of celestial goodness. Hence, though the severest of censors, he is the most pitying. Not a tone of asperity escapes him. He looks on human error with an angel's tenderness, with tears which an angel might shed, and thus reconciles and binds us to our race, at the very moment of revealing its corruptions.

That Fenelon's views of human nature were dark, too dark, we learn from almost every page of his writings; and at this we cannot wonder. He was early thrown into the very court, from which Rochefoucauld drew his celebrated Maxims, perhaps the spot, above all others on the face of the earth, distinguished and disgraced by selfishness, hypocrisy, and intrigue. When we think of Fenelon in the palace of Louis the Fourteenth, it reminds us of a seraph sent on a divine commission into the abodes of the lost; and when we recollect, that in that atmosphere he composed his Telemachus, we doubt whether the records of the world furnish stronger evidence of the power of a divine virtue, to turn temptation into glory and strength, and to make even crowned and prosperous vice a means of triumph and exaltation. — Another cause of Fenelon's unjust views of human life may be found, we think, in his profession. All professions tend to narrow and obscure the intellect, and none more than that of a priest. We know not indeed a nobler or more useful function than that of the Christian minister; but superstitious notions and an imagined sanctity have severed him

more or less from his race, especially in a church which dooms him to celibacy, and from this unnatural, insulated position, it is impossible for him to judge justly of his kind. — We think, too, that Fenelon was led astray by a very common error of exalted minds. He applied too rigorous and unvarying a standard to the multitude. He leaned to the error of expecting the strength of manhood in the child, the harvest in seed-time. On this subject, above all others, we feel that we should speak cautiously. We know that there is a lenity towards human deficiencies full of danger; but there is, too, a severity far more common, and perhaps more ruinous. Human nature, as ordinarily exhibited, merits rebuke; but whoever considers the sore trials, the thick darkness, the impetuous will, the strong passions, under which man commences his moral probation, will temper rebuke with pity and hope. There is a wisdom, perhaps the rarest and sublimest attainment of the intellect, which is at once liberal and severe, indulgent and unbending; which makes merciful and equitable allowance for the innocent infirmities, the necessary errors, the obstructions and temptations of human beings, and at the same time asserts the majesty of virtue, strengthens the sense of accountableness, binds on us self-denial, and points upward, with a never-ceasing importunity, to moral perfection, as the great aim and only happiness of the human soul. We will not say that Fenelon was a stranger to this broad, comprehensive wisdom, but we cannot name it as his chief distinction.

We have said, that we welcome the book under consideration, because it came from so pure and gifted a mind. We add, that we do not welcome it the less for coming from a Catholic. Perhaps we prize it the

more ; for we wish that Protestantism may grow wiser and more tolerant, and we know not a better teacher of these lessons than the character of Fenelon. Such a man is enough to place within the pale of our charity, the whole body to which he belonged. His virtue is broad enough to shield his whole church from that unmeasured, undistinguishing reprobation, with which Protestant zeal has too often assailed it. Whoever remembers, that the Catholic communion numbers in its ranks more than one hundred millions of souls, probably more than all other Christian churches together, must shudder at the sentence of proscription, which has sometimes been passed on this immense portion of human beings. It is time that greater justice were done to this ancient and wide-spread community. The Catholic Church has produced some of the greatest and best men that ever lived, and this is proof enough of its possessing all the means of salvation. Who, that hears the tone of contempt, in which it is sometimes named, would suspect that Charlemagne, Alfred, Raphael, Michael Angelo, Tasso, Bossuet, Pascal, Des Cartes, were Catholics ? Some of the greatest names in arts and arms, on the throne and in the pulpit, were worn by Catholics. To come down to our own times, has not the metropolis of New England witnessed a sublime example of Christian virtue in a Catholic bishop ? Who, among our religious teachers, would solicit a comparison between himself and the devoted Cheverus ? This good man, whose virtues and talents have now raised him to high dignities in church and state, who now wears in his own country the joint honors of an archbishop and a peer, lived in the midst of us, devoting his days and nights, and his whole heart, to the

service of a poor and uneducated congregation. We saw him declining, in a great degree, the society of the cultivated and refined, that he might be the friend of the ignorant and friendless; leaving the circles of polished life, which he would have graced, for the meanest hovels; bearing, with a father's sympathy, the burdens and sorrows of his large spiritual family; charging himself alike with their temporal and spiritual concerns; and never discovering, by the faintest indication, that he felt his fine mind degraded by his seemingly humble office. This good man, bent on his errands of mercy, was seen in our streets under the most burning sun of summer, and the fiercest storms of winter, as if armed against the elements by the power of charity. He has left us, but not to be forgotten. He enjoys among us what to such a man must be dearer than fame. His name is cherished where the great of this world are unknown. It is pronounced with blessings, with grateful tears, with sighs for his return, in many an abode of sorrow and want; and how can we shut our hearts against this proof of the power of the Catholic religion to form good and great men?

These remarks, we trust, will not be perverted. None will suspect us of Catholic partialities. Of all Protestants, we have fewest sympathies with the Romish Church. We go farther than our brethren, in rejecting her mysteries, those monuments of human weakness; and as to her claims to infallibility, we repel them with an indignation not to be understood by sects, which, calling themselves Protestant, renounce in words, but assert in practice, a Popish immunity from error, a Popish control over the faith of their brethren. To us, the spiritual tyranny of Popery is as detestable as

Oriental despotism. When we look back on the history of Papal Rome, we see her, in the days of her power, stained with the blood of martyrs, gorged with rapine, drunk with luxury and crime. But what then? Is it righteous to involve a whole church in guilt, which, after all, belongs to a powerful few? Is it righteous to forget, that Protestantism too has blood on her robes? Is it righteous to forget, that Time, the greatest of reformers, has exerted his silent, purifying power on the Catholic as well as on ourselves? Shall we refuse to see, and to own with joy, that Christianity, even under Papal corruptions, puts forth a divine power? that men cannot wholly spoil it of its celestial efficacy? that, even under its most disastrous eclipse, it still sheds beams to guide the soul to heaven? that there exists in human nature, when loyal to conscience, a power to neutralize error, and to select and incorporate with itself what is pure and ennobling in the most incongruous system? Shall we shut our eyes on the fact, that among the clergy of the Romish Church have risen up illustrious imitators of that magnanimous Apostle, before whom Felix trembled; men, who, in the presence of nobles and kings, have bowed to God alone, have challenged for his law uncompromising homage, and rebuked, in virtue's own undaunted tone, triumphant guilt? Shall we shut our eyes on the fact, that, from the bosom of this corrupt church, have gone forth missionaries to the east and the west, whose toils and martyrdom will not be dimmed by comparison with what is most splendid in Protestant self-sacrifice? We repeat it, not boastingly, but from deep conviction, that we are exceeded by no sect in earnestness of desire for the subversion of the usurped power of the

Catholic Church, of its false doctrines, and of its childish ceremonies so often substituted for inward virtue. We believe that these have wrought, and still work, great evil. Still we see, and delight to see, among those who adhere to them, the best attributes of men and Christians. Still we are accustomed to refresh our piety by books which Catholics have written. Still we find one of our highest gratifications in those works of art, in which Catholic genius has embodied its sublime and touching conceptions of the form and countenance of Jesus, has made us awed witnesses of his miracles and cross, companions of his apostles, and admirers, with a tender reverence, of the meek, celestial beauty of his sainted mother. With these impressions, and this experience, we cannot but lift up our voices against Protestant as well as Papal intolerance. We would purify Protestantism from the worst stain and crime of Rome, her cruel bigotry, her nefarious spirit of exclusion.

It would give us pleasure to enlarge on the character of Fenelon, had we not proposed to ourselves another and still more important object in this review. But, in truth, this grateful duty has been so faithfully performed in the Memoir added to the Selections, that our readers will have no cause to complain of our declining it. This sketch of Fenelon overflows with fervent yet discriminating admiration, and gives utterance to affectionate reverence, with a calmness which wins our confidence. It is not easy to make extracts where the whole is so interesting. But as some of our readers may know Fenelon only by name, and as we wish all to know and love him, we insert a few passages.

"Fenelon, by mixing with all ranks and conditions, by associating with the unfortunate and the sorrowful, by assisting the weak, and by that union of mildness, of energy, and of benevolence, which adapts itself to every character, and to every situation, acquired the knowledge of the moral and physical ills which afflict human nature. It was by this habitual and immediate communication with all classes of society, that he obtained the melancholy conviction of the miseries which distress the greater part of mankind; and to the profound impression of this truth, through his whole life, we must ascribe that tender commiseration for the unfortunate, which he manifests in all his writings, and which he displayed still more powerfully in all his actions."—*pp.* 263, 264.

"In the course of his walks, he would often join the peasants, sit down with them on the grass, talk with them, and console them. He visited them in their cottages, seated himself at table with them, and partook of their humble meals. By such kindness and familiarity, he won their affections, and gained access to their minds. As they loved him as a father and friend, they delighted to listen to his instructions, and to submit to his guidance. Long after his death, the old people who had the happiness of seeing him on these occasions, spoke of him with the most tender reverence. 'There,' they would say, 'is the chair on which our good Archbishop used to sit in the midst of us; we shall see him no more,' and then their tears would flow.

"The diocese of Cambrai was often the theatre of war, and experienced the cruel ravages of retreating and conquering armies. But an extraordinary respect was paid to Fenelon by the invaders of France. The English, the Germans, and the Dutch rivalled the inhabitants of Cambrai in their veneration for the Archbishop. All distinctions of religion and sect, all feelings of hatred and jealousy that divided the nations, seemed to disappear in the presence of Fenelon. Military escorts were offered him, for his personal security, but these he declined, and traversed the countries desolated by war, to visit his flock, trusting in the protection of God. In these visits, his way was marked by alms and benefactions. While he was among them, the people seemed to enjoy peace in the midst of war.

"He brought together into his palace the wretched inhabitants of the country, whom the war had driven from their homes, and took care of them, and fed them at his own table. Seeing one day that one of these peasants ate nothing, he asked him the reason of his abstinence. 'Alas! my Lord,' said the poor man, 'in making my escape from my cottage, I had not time to bring off my cow, which was the support of my family. The enemy will drive her away, and I shall never find another so good.' Fenelon, availing himself of his privilege of safe conduct, immediately set out accompanied by a single servant, and drove the cow back himself to the peasant.

"'This,' said Cardinal Maury, 'is perhaps the finest act of Fenelon's life.' He adds, 'Alas! for the man who reads it without being affected.' Another anecdote, showing his tenderness to the poor, is thus related of him. A literary man, whose library was destroyed by fire, has been deservedly admired for saying, 'I should have profited but little by my books, if they had not taught me how to bear the loss of them.' The remark of Fenelon, who lost his in a similar way, is still more simple and touching. 'I would much rather they were burned, than the cottage of a poor peasant.'

"The virtues of Fenelon give his history the air of romance; but his name will never die. Transports of joy were heard at Cambrai when his ashes were discovered, which, it was thought, had been scattered by the tempest of the Revolution; and to this moment the Flemings call him 'The Good Archbishop.'"—*pp.* 274, 275.

The Memoir closes in this touching strain;—

"When we speak of the death of Fenelon, we realize the truth of what we all acknowledge, though few feel, that the good man never dies; that, to use the words of one of our eloquent divines, 'death was but a circumstance in his being.' We may say, as we read his writings, that we are conscious of his immortality; he is with us; his spirit is around us; it enters into and takes possession of our souls. He is at this time, as he was when living in his diocese, the familiar friend of the poor and the sorrowful, the bold reprover of vice, and the gentle guide of the wanderer; he still says to all, in the words of his Divine Master, 'Come to me, all ye that are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'

"In the houses of the unlearned, where the names of Louis the Fourteenth and Bossuet have never entered, except as connected with Fenelon's, where not a word of his native tongue would be understood, his spirit has entered as a minister of love and wisdom, and a well-worn translation of his 'Reflections,' with a short Memoir of his life, is laid upon the precious word of God. What has thus immortalized Fenelon? For what is he thus cherished in our hearts? Is it his learning? his celebrity? his eloquence? No. It is the spirit of Christian love, the spirit of the Saviour of mankind, that is poured forth from all his writings; of that love that conquers self, that binds us to our neighbour, that raises us to God. This is Fenelon's power, it is this that touches our souls. We feel that he has entered into the full meaning of that sublime passage in St. John, and made it the motto of his life. 'Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not, knoweth not God; for God is love."—*pp.* 282, 283.

The translator has received and will receive the thanks of many readers for giving them an opportunity of holding communion with the mind of Fenelon. Her selections are judicious, and she has caught much of that simplicity which is the charm of Fenelon's style. A want of coherence in the thoughts may sometimes be observed; and this, we suppose, is to be ascribed in part to the author, whose writings seem to be natural breathings of the soul, rather than elaborate works of art; but still more to the translator, whose delicate task of selecting only what would suit and edify the Protestant mind, must have compelled her to make omissions and sudden transitions, not very favorable to order and connexion.

We now come to our principal object. We propose to examine the most distinguishing views, or system of

Fenelon. We say, his "system," for, though he seems to write from immediate impulse, his works possess that unity which belongs to the productions of all superior minds. However he may appear to give his thoughts without elaboration or method, yet one spirit pervades them. We hear everywhere the same mild and penetrating voice, and feel ourselves always in the presence of the same strongly marked mind. What then were Fenelon's most characteristic views? — It may be well to observe, that our principal aim in this inquiry, is, to secure our readers against what we deem exceptionable in his system. We believe, as we have said, that he is not free from excess. He is sometimes unguarded, sometimes extravagant. He needs to be read with caution, as do all who write from their own deeply excited minds. He needs to be received with deductions and explanations; and to furnish these is our present aim. We fear that the very excellences of Fenelon may shield his errors. Admiration prepares the mind for belief; and the moral and religious sensibility of the reader may lay him open to impressions, which, whilst they leave his purity unstained, may engender causeless solicitudes, and repress a just and cheerful interest in the ordinary pleasures and labors of life.

What then are Fenelon's characteristic views? We begin with his views of God, which very much determine and color a religious system; and these are simple and affecting. He seems to regard God but in one light, to think of him but in one character. God always comes to him as the father, as the pitying and purifying friend, of the soul. This spiritual relation of the Supreme Being is, in the book before us, his

all-comprehending, all-absorbing attribute. Our author constantly sets before us God as dwelling in the human mind, and dwelling there, to reprove its guilt, to speak to it with a still voice, to kindle a celestial ray in its darkness, to distil upon it his grace, to call forth its love towards himself, and to bow it, by a gentle, rational sway, to chosen, cheerful, entire subjection to his pure and righteous will. Fenelon had fully received the Christian doctrine of God. He believed in him as the Universal Father, as loving every soul, loving the guiltiest soul, and striving with it to reclaim it to himself. This interest of the Creator in the lost and darkened mind, is the thought which predominates in the writings of this excellent man. God's care of the outward world, of men's outward interests, of the concerns of nations, seems scarcely to enter his mind. It is of God, present to the soul, as a reprover, enlightener, purifier, and guide to perfection, that he loves to speak, and he speaks with a depth of conviction and tenderness, to which, one would think, every reader must respond.

We have seen the predominant view of the Supreme Being in the writings which we are examining. He is a spiritual father, seeking the perfection of every soul which he has made. — Another great question, carrying us still more deeply into Fenelon's mind, now presents itself. In what did he suppose this perfection of the human soul to consist ? His views on this subject may be expressed in two words, self-crucifixion and love to God. Through these human perfection is to be sought. In these, and especially in the last, it consists. According to Fenelon, we are placed between two mighty attractions, self and God ; and the only important ques-

tion for every human being is, to which of these hostile powers he will determine or surrender his mind? His phraseology on this subject is various, and indeed his writings are, in a great measure, expansions of this single view. He lays open the perpetual collisions between the principle of selfishness and the principle of religious love, and calls us with his whole strength of persuasion, to sacrifice the first, to cherish and enthrone the last. This is his great aim. This he urges in a diversity of forms, some of which may be repeated, as helps to a better apprehension of his doctrine. Thus he calls us "to die to ourselves and to live to God;" — "to renounce our own wills and to choose the will of God as our only rule;" — "to renounce our own glory and to seek the glory of God;" — "to distrust ourselves and to put our whole trust in God;" — "to forget ourselves and to give our thoughts to God;" — "to renounce ease and to labor for God;" — "to sacrifice pleasure and to suffer for God;" — "to silence our own passions and to listen to the voice of God;" — "to crucify self-love and to substitute for it the love of God;" — "to surrender our plans and to leave all things to God." These passages give us Fenelon's theory of perfection. Self, as he teaches, is the great barrier between the soul and its Maker, and self is to vanish more and more from our thoughts, desires, hopes, trust, and complacency, and God to become all in all. Our own interests, pleasures, plans, advancement, all are to be swallowed up in an entire and unreserved devotion to the will of God.

Such is the doctrine of Fenelon, and it is essentially just. Self-crucifixion or self-sacrifice, and love to God, including love to his creatures, are the chief elements

of moral perfection. The pure and noble mind of Fenelon recognised as by instinct, and separated from all inferior adjuncts, these essential constituents or attributes of Christian virtue; and there are passages in which he sets before us their deep and silent workings in the heart, and their beautiful manifestations in the life, with a delicacy, power, and truth, which can hardly be surpassed.

Still we think that Fenelon's exposition of his views is open to objection. We think that his phraseology, notwithstanding its apparent simplicity, is often obscure; that he has not set the due bounds to his doctrines; and especially that refined minds, thirsting for perfection, may be led astray by his peculiar mode of exhibiting it. Our objections we will now state more fully.

We have said that self-crucifixion and love to God are, in Fenelon's system, the two chief constituents or elements of virtue and perfection. To these we will give separate attention, although in truth they often coalesce, and always imply one another. We begin with self-crucifixion, or what is often called self-sacrifice, and on this we chiefly differ from the expositions of our author. Perhaps the word *self* occurs more frequently than any other in Fenelon's writings, and he is particularly inclined to place it in contrast with and in opposition to God. According to his common teaching, God and self are hostile influences, having nothing in common; the one, the concentration of all evil, the other of all good. Self is the principle and the seat of all guilt and misery. He is never weary of pouring reproach on self, and, generally speaking, sets no limits to the duty of putting it to a painful death. Now language like this has led men to very injurious modes of

regarding themselves and their own nature, and made them forgetful of what they owe to themselves. It has thrown a cloud over man's condition and prospects. It has led to self-contempt, a vice as pernicious as pride. A man, when told perpetually to crucify *himself*, is apt to include under this word his whole nature, and we fear that, under this teaching, our nature is repressed, its growth stinted, its free movements chained, and of course its beauty, grace, and power impaired. We mean not to charge on Fenelon the error of which we have spoken, or to hold him responsible for its effects. But we do think that it finds shelter under his phraseology, and we deem it so great, so pernicious, as to need a faithful exposition. Men err in nothing more than in disparaging and wronging their own nature. None are just to themselves. The truth on this great subject is indeed so obscured, that it may startle as a paradox. A human being, justly viewed, instead of being bound to general self-crucifixion, cannot reverence and cherish himself too much. This position, we know, is strong. But strong language is needed to encounter strong delusion. We would teach, that great limitations must be set to the duty of renouncing or denying ourselves, and that no self-crucifixion is virtuous, but that which concurs with, and promotes, self-respect. We will unfold our meaning, beginning with positions, which we presume will be controverted by none.

If we first regard man's highest nature, we shall see at once, that to crucify or renounce this, so far from being a duty, would be a crime. The mind, which is our chief distinction, can never be spoken or thought of too reverently. It is God's highest work, his mirror

and representative. Its superiority to the outward universe is mournfully overlooked, and is yet most true. This preëminence we ascribe to the mind, not merely because it can comprehend the universe which cannot comprehend itself, but for still higher reasons. We believe, that the human mind is akin to that intellectual energy which gave birth to nature, and consequently that it contains within itself the seminal and prolific principles from which nature sprung. We believe, too, that the highest purpose of the universe is to furnish materials, scope, and excitements to the mind, in the work of assimilating itself to the Infinite Spirit; that is, to minister to a progress within us, which nothing without us can rival. So transcendent is the mind. No praise can equal God's goodness in creating us after his own spiritual likeness. No imagination can conceive of the greatness of the gift of a rational and moral existence. Far from crucifying this, to unfold it must ever be the chief duty and end of our being, and the noblest tribute we can render to its Author.

We have spoken of the mind, that highest part of ourselves, and of the guilt we should incur by crucifying or renouncing it. But the duty of self-crucifixion requires still greater limitations. Taking human nature as consisting of a body as well as mind, as including animal desire, as framed to receive pleasure through the eye and ear and all the organs of sense, in this larger view, we cannot give it up to the immolation which is sometimes urged. We see in the mixed constitution of man a beautiful whole. We see in the lowest as well as highest capacity an important use; and in every sense an inlet of pleasure not to be disdained. Still more, we believe, that he, in whom the

physical nature is unfolded most entirely and harmoniously, who unites to greatest strength of limbs the greatest acuteness of the senses, may, if he will, derive important aids to the intellect and moral powers from these felicities of his outward frame. We believe, too, that, by a beautiful reaction, the mind, in proportion to its culture and moral elevation, gives vigor and grace to the body, and enlarges its sphere of action and enjoyment. Thus, human nature, viewed as a whole, as a union of the worlds of matter and mind, is a work worthy of a divine author, and its universal developement, not its general crucifixion, is the lesson of wisdom and virtue.

We go still farther. The desire of our own individual interest, pleasure, good, the principle which is ordinarily denominated self-love or self-regard, is not to be warred against and destroyed. The tendency of this to excess is indeed our chief moral danger. Self-partiality, in some form or other, enters into and constitutes chiefly, if not wholly, every sin. But excess is not essential to self-regard, and this principle of our nature is the last which could be spared. Nothing is plainer than that to every being his own welfare is more specially committed than that of any other, and that a special sensibility to it is imperiously demanded by his present state. He alone knows his own wants and perils, and the hourly, perpetual claims of his particular lot; and were he to discard the care of himself for a day, he would inevitably perish. It is a remark of great importance, that the moral danger, to which we are exposed by self-love, arises from the very indispensableness of this principle, from the necessity of its perpetual exercise; for, according to a known law

of the mind, every passion, unless carefully restrained, gains strength by frequency of excitement and action. The tendency of self-love to excess results from its very importance, or from the need in which we stand of its unceasing agency, and is therefore no reason for its extermination, and no reproach on human nature. This tendency, however, does exist. It is strong. It is fearful. It is our chief peril. It is the precipice, on the edge of which we always tread. It is the great appointed trial of our moral nature. To this tendency, unresisted, tamely obeyed, we owe the chief guilt and misery of the present state, the extinction of charity, a moral death more terrible than all the calamities of life. This truth Fenelon felt and taught as few have done, and in his powerful warnings against this peril the chief value of his writings lies. He treats with admirable acuteness the windings of self-partiality, shows how it mixes with the best motives, and how it feeds upon, and so consumes, our very virtues. All this is true. Still, self-love is an essential part of our nature, and must not and cannot be renounced.

The strong tendency of this principle to excess, of which we have now spoken, explains the strong language, in which Fenelon and others have pointed out our danger from this part of our constitution. But it has also given rise to exaggerated views and modes of expression, which have contributed, perhaps, as much as any cause, to the universal want of a just self-respect. Self-love, from its proneness to excess and its constant movements, has naturally been the object of greater attention than any other principle of action; and men, regarding it not so much in its ordinary operations as in its encroachments and its triumphs over other senti-

ments, have come to consider it as the chief constituent of human nature. Philosophers, "falsely so called," have labored to resolve into it all our affections, to make it the sole spring of life, so that the whole mind, according to their doctrine, may be considered as one energy of self-love. If to these remarks we add, that this principle, as its name imports, has self or the individual for its object, we have the explanation of a very important fact in the present discussion. We learn how it is, that self-love has come to be called by the name of *self*, as if it constituted the whole individual, and to be considered as entering into and forming human nature as no other principle does. A man's self-love, especially when unrestrained, is thus thought to be and is spoken of as himself; and hence the duty of crucifying or renouncing himself has naturally been urged by Fenelon, and a host of writers, in the broadest and most unqualified terms.

Now it is not true that self-love is our only principle, or that it constitutes ourselves any more than other principles, and the wrong done to our nature by such modes of speech needs to be resisted. Our nature has other elements or constituents, and vastly higher ones, to which self-love was meant to minister, and which are at war with its excesses. For example, we have reason, or intellectual energy, given us for the pursuit and acquisition of truth; and this is essentially a disinterested principle; for truth, which is its object, is of a universal, impartial nature. The great province of the intellectual faculty is, to acquaint the individual with the laws and order of the divine system; a system, which spreads infinitely beyond himself, of which he forms a very small part, which embraces innumerable beings equally fa-

vored by God, and which proposes as its sublime and beneficent end, the ever-growing good of the whole. Again, human nature has a variety of affections, corresponding to our domestic and most common relations; affections, which in multitudes overpower self-love, which make others the chief objects of our care, which nerve the arm for ever-recurring toil by day, and strengthen the wearied frame to forego the slumbers of night. Then there belongs to every man the general sentiment of humanity, which responds to all human sufferings, to a stranger's tears and groans, and often prompts to great sacrifices for his relief. Above all there is the moral principle, that which should especially be called a man's self, for it is clothed with a kingly authority over his whole nature, and was plainly given to bear sway over every desire. This is eminently a disinterested principle. Its very essence is impartiality. It has no respect of persons. It is the principle of justice, taking the rights of all under its protection, and frowning on the least wrong, however largely it may serve ourselves. This moral nature especially delights in, and enjoins, a universal charity, and makes the heart thrill with exulting joy, at the sight or hearing of magnanimous deeds, of perils fronted, and death endured, in the cause of humanity. Now these various principles, and especially the last, are as truly ourselves as self-love. When a man thinks of himself, these ought to occur to him as his chief attributes. He can hardly injure himself more, than by excluding these from his conception of himself, and by making self-love the great constituent of his nature.

We have urged these remarks on the narrow sense often given to the word *self*, because we are persuaded,

that it leads to degrading ideas of human nature, and to the pernicious notion, that we practise a virtuous self-sacrifice in holding it in contempt. We would have it understood, that high faculties form this despised self, as truly as low desires; and we would add, that, when these are faithfully unfolded, this self takes rank among the noblest beings in the universe. To illustrate this thought, we ask the reader's attention to an important, but much neglected view of virtue and religion. These are commonly spoken of in an abstract manner, as if they were distinct from ourselves, as if they were foreign existences, which enter the human mind, and dwell there in a kind of separation from itself. Now religion and virtue, wherever they exist, are the mind itself, and nothing else. They are human nature, and nothing else. A good man's piety and virtue are not distinct possessions; they are himself, and all the glory which belongs to them belongs to himself. What is religion? Not a foreign inhabitant, not something alien to our nature, which comes and takes up its abode in the soul. It is the soul itself, lifting itself up to its Maker. What is virtue? It is the soul, listening to, and revering, and obeying a law which belongs to its very essence, the law of duty. We sometimes smile, when we hear men decrying human nature, and in the same breathing exalting religion to the skies; as if religion were any thing more than human nature, acting in obedience to its chief law. Religion and virtue, as far as we possess them, are ourselves; and the homage which is paid to these attributes, is in truth a tribute to the soul of man. Self-crucifixion then, should it exclude self-reverence, would be any thing but virtue.

We would briefly suggest another train of thought

leading to the same result. Self-crucifixion, or self-renunciation, is a work, and a work requires an agent. By whom then is it accomplished? We answer, by the man himself, who is the subject of it. It is he who is summoned to the effort. He is called by a voice within, and by the law of God, to put forth power over himself, to rule his own spirit, to subdue every passion. Now this inward power, which self-crucifixion supposes and demands, is the most signal proof of a high nature which can be given. It is the most illustrious power which God confers. It is a sovereignty worth more than that over outward nature. It is the chief constituent of the noblest order of virtues; and its greatness, of course, demonstrates the greatness of the human mind, which is perpetually bound and summoned to put it forth. But this is not all. Self-crucifixion has an object, an end; and what is it? Its great end is, to give liberty and energy to our nature. Its aim is, not to break down the soul, but to curb those lusts and passions, "which war against the soul," that the moral and intellectual faculties may rise into new life, and may manifest their divine original. Self-crucifixion, justly viewed, is the suppression of the passions, that the power and progress of thought, and conscience, and pure love, may be unrestrained. It is the destruction of the brute, that the angel may unfold itself within. It is founded on our godlike capacities, and the expansion and glory of these is its end. Thus the very duty, which by some is identified with self-contempt, implies and imposes self-reverence. It is the belief and the choice of perfection as our inheritance and our end.

We have thus shown under what great limitations,

self-crucifixion, or self-renunciation, is to be understood, and how remote it is from self-contempt. Our purpose was, after closing this discussion, to give a rational interpretation of the phrases in which Fenelon has enjoined this duty. But our limits allow us just to glance at one or two of these. Perhaps he calls upon us to do nothing so often as "to renounce our own wills." This is a favorite phrase; and what does it imply? that we are to cease to will? Nothing less. The truth is, that the human will is never so strenuous, as in this act which is called the renunciation of itself, and by nothing does it more build up its own energy. The phrase means, that we should sacrifice inclination at the least suggestion of duty. But who does not know, that the mind never puts forth such strength of purpose or will, as in overcoming desire? And what is the highest end and benefit of this warfare with desire? It is, that the mind may accumulate force of moral purpose, that the will may more sternly, unconquerably resolve on the hardest duties and sublimest virtues to which God may call us.

Once more, we are again and again exhorted by Fenelon to "forget ourselves." And what means this? Self-oblivion, literally understood, is an impossibility. We may as easily annihilate our being as our self-consciousness. Self-remembrance is in truth a duty, needful to the safety of every hour, and especially necessary to the great work of life, which is the conforming of ourselves, of our whole nature, to the will of God. There is no danger of our thinking of ourselves too much, if we will think justly; that is, if we will view ourselves as what we are, as moral beings, accountable to a Divine Lawgiver, framed to delight in and to seek

virtue, framed for an ever-spreading philanthropy, called to sympathize with, and to suffer for, others, and, through this path, to ascend to our Original. There are, however, senses, in which we cannot too much forget ourselves. Our improvements of whatever kind, our good deeds, our virtues, whenever they are seized upon and magnified by self-love, or so recalled as to lift us above others, and to stifle that sense of deficiency and thirst for progress, by which alone we can be carried forward, these we cannot too earnestly drive from our thoughts. Our distinctions, whether of mind, body, or condition, when they minister to vanity or pride, when they weaken the consciousness of a common nature with the human race, narrow our sympathies, or deprave our judgments, these we cannot be too solicitous to forget. Our pleasures, when they are so exaggerated by the imagination as to distract and overwhelm the sense of duty, should be forced to quit their grasp on our minds. Such parts or constituents of ourselves we are to forget. Our moral, intellectual, immortal nature we cannot remember too much. Under the consciousness of it we are always to live.

According to the views now given, self-crucifixion is the subjection or sacrifice of the inferior to the higher principles of our nature. It is the practical recognition of the supremacy and dignity of our rational and moral powers. No duty involves a more reverential view and care of ourselves. We have been the more solicitous to give this view of self-renunciation, because its true spirit is often mistaken, because it is often so set forth as to degrade, instead of exalting, the mind. In truth, we feel more and more the importance of bringing men to juster conceptions of the inward gift

with which God has enriched them. We desire nothing so much, as to open their eyes to their own spiritual possessions. We feel indeed the difficulties of the subject. We know, that we have to combat with a secret incredulity in many minds. We know, that the clearest expositions will be imperfectly understood by those, who have nothing in their experience to interpret what we utter. The mind, we are aware, can be clearly revealed to itself, only by its own progress. Its capacities of thought, of action, of endurance, of triumphing over pleasure and pain, of identifying itself with other beings, of seeking truth without prejudice and without fear, of uniting itself with God, of sacrificing life to duty, these immortal energies can only be felt to be real, and duly honored, by those in whom they are gradually and steadily unfolded. Still we do not despair of meeting some response, though faint, in multitudes. Such a spirit, as God has breathed into men, cannot easily exist, without giving some signs of its divine original. In most men, there are some revelations of their own nature, some beams of a light which belongs not to the earth, some sympathies with what is good and great in character, some perceptions of beauty, some gushings from the deep fountain of love in the soul, some thirstings for a purer happiness, some experience of the peculiar joy of a disinterested deed, some dim conceptions at least of their intimate relations to God. Most men understand through experience these testimonies to the secret wealth and immortal destination of the soul; whilst, in not a few, such a measure of intellectual and moral power has been called forth, that nothing is needed but a wise direction of their thoughts upon themselves, to open to them the

magnificent prospect of their own spiritual energy, and of the unbounded good into which it may be unfolded. For such we have written. We regard nothing so important to a human being, as the knowledge of his own mind, and of its intimate connexion with the Infinite Mind. Faith in what man contains as a germ in his own breast, faith in what he may become, in what he was framed to be, in that state of power, light, purity, joy, to which Jesus Christ came to exalt him, this faith seems to us the quickening, saving, renovating principle, which God sent his Son to revive in the soul, and happy are they who can spread its empire in the world.

We have finished our remarks on the first element of perfection, according to Fenelon, self-crucifixion. We proceed to the second, love to God. On this topic we intended to enlarge, but have left ourselves little room. We are happy to say, that we have less to object to Fenelon's expositions under this head, than under the former. Of the grandeur and the happiness of this principle he speaks truly, worthily, in the penetrating language of calm and deep conviction. In one particular, we think him defective. He has not stated, and in truth, very few do state, with sufficient strength and precision, the moral foundation and the moral nature of religion. He has not taught, with sufficient clearness, the great truth, that love to God is, from beginning to end, the love of virtue. He did not sufficiently feel, that religion is the expansion and most perfect form of the moral faculty of man. He sometimes teaches, that, to do God's will, we must renounce ourselves and silence reason; as if the divine will were not in accordance with our faculties; as if it were something dark

and mysterious ; as if, to follow it, we must quench the light of our own minds. Now the truth is, that the divine will is in harmony with our nature. It is God's approbation and injunction of that moral rectitude, of which the great lines are written on the human soul, and to which reason and conscience, even when they fail to secure obedience, do yet secretly, and in no small degree, respond. The human mind and the divine law are not distinct and disconnected things. If man were not a law to himself, he could not receive the revelation of a law from Heaven. Were not the principle of duty an essential part of his mind, he could be bound to no obedience. Religion has its foundation in our moral nature, and is indeed its most enlarged and glorious form, and we lament that this great truth does not shine more brightly in the pages of Fenelon. We intended to give to it a particular discussion ; but as we cannot do it justice in the present article, we prefer to dismiss it, and to offer a few miscellaneous remarks on that sentiment of love towards God, on which our author so perpetually insists.

We are aware that to some men Fenelon may seem an enthusiast. Some may doubt or deny the possibility of that strong, deep, supreme affection towards the Supreme Being, with which Fenelon's book overflows. We wonder at this skepticism. We know no property of human nature more undoubted, than its capacity and fulness of affection. We see its love overflowing in its domestic connexions, in friendships, and especially in its interest in beings separated by oceans and the lapse of ages. Let it not be said, that the affections, to which we here refer, have fellow-beings for their objects, and do not therefore prove our capacity of re-

ligious attachment. The truth is, that one spirit runs through all our affections, as far as they are pure; and love to mankind, directed aright, is the germ and element of love to the Divinity. Whatever is excellent and venerable in human beings, is of God, and in attaching ourselves to it we are preparing our hearts for its Author. Whoever sees and recognises the moral dignity of impartial justice and disinterested goodness in his fellow-creatures, has begun to pay homage to the attributes of God. The first emotion awakened in the soul, we mean filial attachment, is the dawning of love to our Father in Heaven. Our deep interest in the history of good and great men, our veneration towards enlightened legislators, our sympathy with philanthropists, our delight in mighty efforts of intellect consecrated to a good cause, all these sentiments prove our capacity of an affectionate reverence to God; for he is at once the inspirer and the model of this intellectual and moral grandeur in his creatures. We even think, that our love of nature has an affinity with the love of God, and was meant as a preparation for it; for the harmonies of nature are only his wisdom made visible; the heavens, so sublime, are a revelation of his immensity; and the beauty of creation images to us his overflowing love and blessedness. To us, hardly any thing seems plainer, than that the soul was made for God. Not only its human affections guide it to him; not only its deeps wants, its dangers, and helplessness, guide it to him; there are still higher indications of the end for which it was made. It has a capacity of more than human love, a principle or power of adoration, which cannot bound itself to finite natures, which carries up the thoughts above the visible universe, and which, in

approaching God, rises into a solemn transport, a mingled awe and joy, prophetic of a higher life; and a brighter signature of our end and happiness cannot be conceived.

We are aware that it may be objected, that many and great obstructions to a supreme love of God belong to our very constitution and condition, and that these go far to disprove the doctrine of our being framed for religion as our chief good. But this argument does not move us. We learn from every survey of man's nature and history, that he is ordained to approach the end of his creation through many and great obstructions; that effort is the immutable law of his being; that a good, in proportion to its grandeur, is encompassed with hardship. The obstructions to religion are not greater than those to knowledge; and accordingly history gives as dark views of human ignorance, as of human guilt. Yet who, on this ground, denies that man was formed for knowledge, that progress in truth is the path of nature, and that he has impulses which are to carry forward his intellectual powers without end? It is God's pleasure, in his provisions for the mind, as well as for the body, to give us in a rude state the materials of good, and to leave us to frame from them, amidst much conflict, a character of moral and religious excellence; and in this ordination we see his wise benevolence; for by this we may rise to the unutterable happiness of a free and moral union with our Creator. We ought to add, that the obstructions to the love of God do not lie wholly in ourselves. Perhaps the greatest is a false theology. This interposes thick clouds between the soul and its Maker. It darkens and dishonors God and his works, and leaves nothing to sustain our trust and love.

otives, which are most commonly urged for
g supreme affection towards God, are drawn
r frailty and weakness, and from our need of more than human succour in the trials of life and in the pains of death. But religion has a still higher claim. It answers to the deepest want of human nature. We refer to our want of some being or beings, to whom we may give our hearts, whom we may love more than ourselves, for whom we may live and be ready to die, and whose character responds to that idea of perfection, which, however dim and undefined, is an essential element of every human soul. We cannot be happy beyond our love. At the same time, love may prove our chief woe, if bestowed unwisely, disproportionately, and on unworthy objects; if confined to beings of imperfect virtue, with whose feelings we cannot always innocently sympathize, whose interests we cannot always righteously promote, who narrow us to themselves instead of breathing universal charity, who are frail, mutable, exposed to suffering, pain, and death. To secure a growing happiness and a spotless virtue, we need for the heart a being worthy of its whole treasure of love, to whom we may consecrate our whole existence, in approaching whom we enter an atmosphere of purity and brightness, in sympathizing with whom we cherish only noble sentiments, in devoting ourselves to whom we espouse great and enduring interests, in whose character we find the spring of an ever-enlarging philanthropy, and by attachment to whom, all our other attachments are hallowed, protected, and supplied with tender and sublime consolations under bereavement and blighted hope. Such a being is God.

The word which Fenelon has most frequently used

to express the happiness to which the mind ascends by a supreme love of God, is "peace," perhaps the most expressive which language affords. We fear, however, that its full import is not always received. There is a twofold peace. The first is negative. It is relief from disquiet and corroding care. It is repose after conflict and storms. But there is another and a higher peace, to which this is but the prelude, "a peace of God which passeth all understanding," and properly called "the kingdom of heaven within us." This state is any thing but negative. It is the highest and most strenuous action of the soul, but an entirely harmonious action, in which all our powers and affections are blended in a beautiful proportion, and sustain and perfect one another. It is more than silence after storms. It is as the concord of all melodious sounds. Has the reader never known a season, when, in the fullest flow of thought and feeling, in the universal action of the soul, an inward calm, profound as midnight silence, yet bright as the still summer noon, full of joy, but unbroken by one throb of tumultuous passion, has been breathed through his spirit, and given him a glimpse and presage of the serenity of a happier world? Of this character is the peace of religion. It is a conscious harmony with God and the creation, an alliance of love with all beings, a sympathy with all that is pure and happy, a surrender of every separate will and interest, a participation of the spirit and life of the universe, an entire concord of purpose with its Infinite Original. This is peace, and the true happiness of man; and we think that human nature has never entirely lost sight of this its great end. It has always sighed for a repose, in which energy of thought and will might be tempered with an

all-pervading tranquillity. We seem to discover aspirations after this good, a dim consciousness of it, in all ages of the world. We think we see it in those systems of Oriental and Grecian philosophy, which proposed, as the consummation of present virtue, a release from all disquiet, and an intimate union and harmony with the Divine Mind. We even think, that we trace this consciousness, this aspiration, in the works of ancient art which time has spared to us, in which the sculptor, aiming to embody his deepest thoughts of human perfection, has joined with the fulness of life and strength, a repose, which breathes into the spectator an admiration as calm as it is exalted. Man, we believe, never wholly loses the sentiment of his true good. There are yearnings, sighings, which he does not himself comprehend, which break forth alike in his prosperous and adverse seasons, which betray a deep, indestructible faith in a good that he has not found, and which, in proportion as they grow distinct, rise to God, and concentrate the soul in him, as at once its life and rest, the fountain at once of energy and of peace.

In the remarks, which have now been suggested by the writings of Fenelon, we have aimed to free religion from exaggerations, which, we fear, weaken its influence over reasonable men, and at the same time to illustrate its dignity and happiness. We want time, or we should enlarge on the importance of this great subject to every human being. We cannot however leave it, without earnestly recommending it to the attention of men of superior minds. The neglect which it generally receives from these is one of the most discouraging signs of our times. The claims of religion on intelligent

men are not yet understood, and the low place which it holds among the objects of liberal inquiry, will one day be recollected as the shame of our age. Some remarks on this topic may form a not unsuitable conclusion to the present article.

It is, we fear, an unquestionable fact, that religion, considered as an intellectual subject, is in a great measure left to a particular body of men, as a professional concern ; and the fact is as much to be wondered at as deplored. It is wonderful that any mind, and especially a superior one, should not see in religion the highest object of thought. It is wonderful that the infinite God, the noblest theme of the universe, should be considered as a monopoly of professed theologians ; that a subject so vast, awful, and exalting, as our relation to the Divinity, should be left to technical men, to be handled so much for sectarian purposes. Religion is the property and dearest interest of the human race. Every man has an equal concern in it. It should be approached with an independence on human authority. It should be rescued from all the factions, which have seized upon it as their particular possession. Men of the highest intellect should feel, that, if there be a God, then his character and our relation to him throw all other subjects into obscurity, and that the intellect, if not consecrated to him, can never attain its true use, its full dimensions, and its proper happiness. Religion, if it be true, is central truth, and all knowledge, which is not gathered round it, and quickened and illuminated by it, is hardly worthy the name. To this great theme we would summon all orders of mind, the scholar, the statesman, the student of nature, and the observer of life. It is a subject to which every faculty and every

acquisition may pay tribute, which may receive aids and lights from the accuracy of the logician, from the penetrating spirit of philosophy, from the intuitions of genius, from the researches of history, from the science of the mind, from physical science, from every branch of criticism, and, though last not least, from the spontaneous suggestions and the moral aspirations of pure but unlettered men.

It is a fact which shocks us, and which shows the degraded state of religion, that not a few superior minds look down upon it as a subject beneath their investigation. Though allied with all knowledge, and especially with that of human nature and human duty, it is regarded as a separate and inferior study, particularly fitted to the gloom of a convent, and the seclusion of a minister. Religion is still confounded, in many and in gifted minds, with the jargon of monks, and the subtilties and strifes of theologians. It is thought a mystery, which, far from coalescing, wars with our other knowledge. It is never ranked with the sciences which expand and adorn the mind. It is regarded as a method of escaping future ruin, not as a vivifying truth through which the intellect and heart are alike to be invigorated and enlarged. Its bearing on the great objects of thought and the great interests of life is hardly suspected. This degradation of religion into a technical study, this disjunction of it from morals, from philosophy, from the various objects of liberal research, has done it infinite injury, has checked its progress, has perpetuated errors which gathered round it in times of barbarism and ignorance, has made it a mark for the sophistry and ridicule of the licentious, and has infused a lurking skepticism into many powerful understandings.

Nor has religion suffered alone. The whole mind is darkened by the obscuration of this its central light. Its reasonings and judgments become unstable through want of this foundation to rest upon. Religion is to the whole sphere of truth, what God is to the universe, and in dethroning it, or confining it to a narrow range, we commit very much such an injury on the soul, as the universe would suffer, were the Infinite Being to abandon it, or to contract his energy to a small province of his creation.

The injury done to literature by divorcing it from religion is a topic worthy of separate discussion. Literature has thus lost power and permanent interest. It has become, in a great measure, superficial, an image of transient modes of thought and of arbitrary forms of life, not the organ and expression of immutable truth, and of deep workings of the soul. We beg not to be misunderstood. We have no desire that literature should confine itself wholly or chiefly to religious topics, and we hardly know a greater calamity which it could incur, than by degenerating into religious cant. Next to profaneness, we dread the affectation of piety and the mechanical repetition of sacred phraseology. We only lament, that literature has so generally been the product and utterance of minds, which have not lived, thought, and written, under the light of a rational and sublime faith. Severed from this, it wants the principle of immortality. We do not speak lightly when we say, that all works of the intellect, which have not in some measure been quickened by the spirit of religion, are doomed to perish or to lose their power; and that genius is preparing for itself a sepulchre, when it disjoins itself from the Universal Mind. Religion is not always to

remain in its present dark, depressed condition. Already there are signs of a brighter day. It begins to be viewed more generously. It is gradually attracting to itself superior understandings. It is rising from the low rank of a professional, technical study, and asserting its supremacy among the objects of the mind. A new era, we trust, is opening upon the world, and all literature will feel its power. In proportion as the true and sublime conception of God shall unfold itself in the soul, and shall become there a central sun, shedding its beams on all objects of thought, there will be a want of sympathy with all works which have not been quickened by this heavenly influence. It will be felt that the poet has known little of nature, that he has seen it only under clouds, if he have not seen it under this celestial light. It will be felt, that man, the great subject of literature, when viewed in separation from his Maker and his end, can be as little understood and portrayed, as a plant torn from the soil in which it grew, and cut off from communication with the clouds and sun.

We are aware that objections will spring up to the doctrine, that all literature should be produced under the influence of religion. We shall be told, that in this way literature will lose all variety and spirit, that a monotonous and solemn hue will spread itself over writing, and that a library will have the air of a tomb. We do not wonder at this fear. Religion has certainly been accustomed to speak in sepulchral tones, and to wear any aspect but a bright and glowing one. It has lost its free and various movement. But let us not ascribe to its nature, what has befallen it from adverse circumstances. The truth is, that religion, justly viewed, sur-

passes all other principles, in giving a free and manifold action to the mind. It recognises in every faculty and sentiment the workmanship of God, and assigns a sphere of agency to each. It takes our whole nature under its guardianship, and with a parental love ministers to its inferior as well as higher gratifications. False religion mutilates the soul, sees evil in our innocent sensibilities, and rules with a tyrant's frown and rod. True religion is a mild and lawful sovereign, governing to protect, to give strength, to unfold all our inward resources. We believe, that, under its influence, literature is to pass its present limits, and to put itself forth in original forms of composition. Religion is of all principles most fruitful, multiform, and unconfined. It is sympathy with that Being, who seems to delight in diversifying the modes of his agency, and the products of his wisdom and power. It does not chain us to a few essential duties, or express itself in a few unchanging modes of writing. It has the liberality and munificence of nature, which not only produces the necessary root and grain, but pours forth fruits and flowers. It has the variety and bold contrasts of nature, which, at the foot of the awful mountain, scoops out the freshest, sweetest valleys, and embosoms, in the wild, troubled ocean, islands, whose vernal airs, and loveliness, and teeming fruitfulness, almost breathe the joys of Paradise. Religion will accomplish for literature what it most needs; that is, will give it depth, at the same time that it heightens its grace and beauty. The union of these attributes is most to be desired. Our literature is lamentably superficial, and to some the beautiful and the superficial even seem to be naturally conjoined. Let not beauty be so wronged. It resides chiefly in pro-

found thoughts and feelings. It overflows chiefly in the writings of poets, gifted with a sublime and piercing vision. A beautiful literature springs from the depth and fulness of intellectual and moral life, from an energy of thought and feeling, to which nothing, as we believe, ministers so largely as enlightened religion.

So far from a monotonous solemnity overspreading literature in consequence of the all-pervading influence of religion, we believe, that the sportive and comic forms of composition, instead of being abandoned, will only be refined and improved. We know that these are supposed to be frowned upon by piety; but they have their root in the constitution which God has given us, and ought not therefore to be indiscriminately condemned. The propensity to wit and laughter does indeed, through excessive indulgence, often issue in a character of heartless levity, low mimicry, or unfeeling ridicule. It often seeks gratification in regions of impurity, throws a gayety round vice, and sometimes even pours contempt on virtue. But, though often and mournfully perverted, it is still a gift of God, and may and ought to minister, not only to innocent pleasure, but to the intellect and the heart. Man was made for relaxation as truly as for labor; and by a law of his nature, which has not received the attention it deserves, he finds perhaps no relaxation so restorative, as that in which he reverts to his childhood, seems to forget his wisdom, leaves the imagination to exhilarate itself by sportive inventions, talks of amusing incongruities in conduct and events, smiles at the innocent eccentricities and odd mistakes of those whom he most esteems, allows himself in arch allusions or kind-hearted satire, and transports himself into a world of ludicrous com-

binations. We have said, that, on these occasions, the mind seems to put off its wisdom; but the truth is, that, in a pure mind, wisdom retreats, if we may so say, to its centre, and there, unseen, keeps guard over this transient folly, draws delicate lines which are never to be passed in the freest moments, and, like a judicious parent watching the sports of childhood, preserves a stainless innocence of soul in the very exuberance of gayety. This combination of moral power with wit and humor, with comic conceptions and irrepressible laughter, this union of mirth and virtue, belongs to an advanced stage of the character; and we believe, that, in proportion to the diffusion of an enlightened religion, this action of the mind will increase, and will overflow in compositions, which, joining innocence to sportiveness, will communicate unmixed delight. Religion is not at variance with occasional mirth. In the same character, the solemn thought and the sublime emotions of the improved Christian, may be joined with the unanxious freedom, buoyancy, and gayety of early years.

We will add but one more illustration of our views. We believe, that the union of religion with genius will favor that species of composition to which it may seem at first to be least propitious. We refer to that department of literature, which has for its object the delineation of the stronger and more terrible and guilty passions. Strange as it may appear, these gloomy and appalling features of our nature may be best comprehended and portrayed by the purest and noblest minds. The common idea is, that overwhelming emotions, the more they are experienced, can the more effectually be described. We have one strong presumption against this doctrine. Tradition leads us to believe, that Shak-

speare, though he painted so faithfully and fearfully the storms of passion, was a calm and cheerful man. The passions are too engrossed by their objects to meditate on themselves; and none are more ignorant of their growth and subtile workings, than their own victims. Nothing reveals to us the secrets of our own souls like religion; and in disclosing to us, in ourselves, the tendency of passion to absorb every energy, and to spread its hues over every thought, it gives us a key to all souls; for, in all, human nature is essentially one, having the same spiritual elements, and the same grand features. No man, it is believed, understands the wild and irregular motions of the mind, like him in whom a principle of divine order has begun to establish peace. No man knows the horror of thick darkness which gathers over the slaves of vehement passion, like him who is rising into the light and liberty of virtue. There is indeed a selfish shrewdness, which is thought to give a peculiar and deep insight into human nature. But the knowledge, of which it boasts, is partial, distorted, and vulgar, and wholly unfit for the purposes of literature We value it little. We believe, that no qualification avails so much to a knowledge of human nature in all its forms, in its good and evil manifestations, as that enlightened, celestial charity, which religion alone inspires; for this establishes sympathies between us and all men, and thus makes them intelligible to us. A man, imbued with this spirit, alone contemplates vice as it really exists, and as it ought always to be described. In the most depraved fellow-beings he sees partakers of his own nature. Amidst the terrible ravages of the passions, he sees conscience, though prostrate, not destroyed, nor wholly powerless. He sees the proofs

of an unextinguished moral life, in inward struggles, in occasional relentings, in sighings for lost innocence, in reviving throbs of early affections, in the sophistry by which the guilty mind would become reconciled to itself, in remorse, in anxious forebodings, in despair, perhaps in studied recklessness and cherished self-forgetfulness. These conflicts, between the passions and the moral nature, are the most interesting subjects in the branch of literature to which we refer, and we believe, that to portray them with truth and power, the man of genius can find in nothing such effectual aid, as in the developement of the moral and religious principles in his own breast.

We have given but a superficial view of a great subject. The connexion of religion with intellect and literature is yet to be pointed out. We conclude with expressing our strong conviction that the human mind will become more various, piercing, and all-comprehending, more capable of understanding and expressing the solemn and the sportive, the terrible and the beautiful, the profound and the tender, in proportion as it shall be illumined and penetrated by the true knowledge of God. Genius, intellect, imagination, taste, and sensibility, must all be baptized into religion, or they will never know, and never make known, their real glory and immortal power.

# THE MORAL ARGUMENT AGAINST

# CALVINISM,

Illustrated in a Review of a Work entitled "A General View of the Doctrines of Christianity, designed more especially for the Edification and Instruction of Families. Boston. 1809."

The work, of which we have prefixed the title to this article, was published several years ago, and has been read by many among us with pleasure and profit. But it is not known as widely as it should be, and we wish to call to it the notice which it merits. It is not an original work, but was compiled chiefly from the writings of the Rev. Robert Fellowes, whose name is probably known to most of our readers. The title we think not altogether happy, because it raises an expectation which the book does not answer. We should expect from it a regular statement of the great truths of our religion; but we find, what at present is perhaps as useful, a vindication of Christianity from the gross errors, which Calvinism has labored to identify with this divine system. This may easily be supposed from the table of contents. The book professes to treat of the following subjects: — The nature of religion and the mistakes that occur on that subject; the free-agency

and accountableness of man; the fall of Adam, and original sin; the doctrine of faith in general, and of religious faith in particular; the doctrine of works; the doctrine of regeneration; the doctrine of repentance; the doctrine of grace; the doctrine of election and reprobation; the doctrine of perseverance; the visiting of the iniquities of the fathers upon the children; and the sin against the Holy Ghost. — By those, who are acquainted with the five thorny points of Calvinism, the design of this compilation will be sufficiently understood from the enumeration of topics now given; and few designs are more praiseworthy, than to free Christianity from the reproach brought upon it by that system.

The work under review is professedly popular in its style and mode of discussion. It has little refined and elaborate reasoning, but appeals to the great moral principles of human nature, and to the general strain of the Scriptures. It expresses strongly and without circumlocution the abhorrence with which every mind, uncorrupted by false theology, must look on Calvinism; and although some of its delineations may be overcharged, yet they are substantially correct, and their strength is their excellence. The truth is, that nothing is so necessary on this subject as to awaken moral feeling in men's breasts. Calvinism owes its perpetuity to the influence of fear in palsying the moral nature. Men's minds and consciences are subdued by terror, so that they dare not confess, even to themselves, the shrinking, which they feel, from the unworthy views which this system gives of God; and, by thus smothering their just abhorrence, they gradually extinguish it, and even come to vindicate in God what would disgrace

his creatures. A voice of power and solemn warning is needed to rouse them from this lethargy, to give them a new and a juster dread, the dread of incurring God's displeasure, by making him odious, and exposing religion to insult and aversion. — In the present article, we intend to treat this subject with great freedom. But we beg that it may be understood that by Calvinism we intend only the peculiarities or distinguishing features of that system. We would also have it remembered, that these peculiarities form a small part of the religious faith of a Calvinist. He joins with them the general, fundamental, and most important truths of Christianity, by which they are always neutralized in a greater or less degree, and in some cases nullified. Accordingly it has been our happiness to see in the numerous body by which they are professed, some of the brightest examples of Christian virtue. Our hostility to the doctrine does not extend to its advocates. In bearing our strongest testimony against error, we do not the less honor the moral and religious worth, with which it is often connected.

The book under review will probably be objected to by theologians, because it takes no notice of a distinction, invented by Calvinistic metaphysicians, for rescuing their doctrines from the charge of aspersing God's equity and goodness. We refer to the distinction between *natural* and *moral inability*, a subtilty which may be thought to deserve some attention, because it makes such a show in some of the principal books of this sect. But, with due deference to its defenders, it seems to us groundless and idle, a distinction without a difference. An inability to do our duty, which is *born* with us, is to all intents and according to the

established meaning of the word, *natural*. Call it moral, or what you please, it is still a part of the nature which our Creator gave us, and to suppose that he punishes us for it, because it is an inability seated in the will, is just as absurd, as to suppose him to punish us for a weakness of sight or of a limb. Common people cannot understand this distinction, cannot split this hair; and it is no small objection to Calvinism, that, according to its ablest defenders, it can only be reconciled to God's perfections, by a metaphysical subtilty, which the mass of people cannot comprehend.

If we were to speak as critics of the style of this book, we should say, that, whilst generally clear, and sometimes striking, it has the faults of the style which was very current not many years ago in this country, and which, we rejoice to say, is giving place to a better. The style to which we refer, and which threatened to supplant good writing in this country, intended to be elegant, but fell into jejuneness and insipidity. It delighted in words and arrangements of words, which were little soiled by common use, and mistook a spruce neatness for grace. We had a Procrustes' bed for sentences, and there seemed to be a settled war between the style of writing and the free style of conversation. Times we think have changed. Men have learned more to write as they speak, and are ashamed to dress up familiar thoughts, as if they were just arrived from a far country, and could not appear in public without a foreign and studied attire. They have learned that common words are common, precisely because most fitted to express real feeling and strong conception, and that the circuitous, measured phraseology, which was called elegance, was but the parade of weakness. They have

learned that words are the signs of thought, and worthless counterfeits without it, and that style is good, when, instead of being anxiously cast into a mould, it seems a free and natural expression of thought, and gives to us with power the workings of the author's mind.

We have been led to make these remarks on the style which in a degree marks the book before us, from a persuasion, that this mode of writing has been particularly injurious to religion, and to rational religion. It has crept into sermons perhaps more than into any other compositions, and has imbued them with that soporific quality, which they have sometimes been found to possess in an eminent degree. How many hearers have been soothed by a smooth, watery flow of words, a regular chime of sentences, and elegantly rocked into repose! We are aware, that preachers, above all writers, are excusable for this style, because it is the easiest; and, having too much work to do, they must do it of course in the readiest way. But we mourn the necessity, and mourn still more the effect.—It gives us great pleasure to say, that, in this particular, we think we perceive an improvement taking place in this region. Preaching is becoming more direct, aims more at impression, and seeks the nearest way to men's hearts and consciences. We often hear from the pulpit strong thought in plain and strong language. It is hoped, from the state of society, that we shall not fly from one extreme to another, and degenerate into coarseness; but perhaps even this is a less evil than tameness and insipidity.

To return; the principal argument against Calvinism, in the General View of Christian Doctrines, is the *moral argument*, or that which is drawn from the inconsistency of the system with the divine perfections. It is

plain, that a doctrine, which contradicts our best ideas of goodness and justice, cannot come from the just and good God, or be a true representation of his character. This moral argument has always been powerful to the pulling down of the strong-holds of Calvinism. Even in the dark period, when this system was shaped and finished at Geneva, its advocates often writhed under the weight of it; and we cannot but deem it a mark of the progress of society, that Calvinists are more and more troubled with the palpable repugnance of their doctrines to God's nature, and accordingly labor to soften and explain them, until in many cases the name only is retained. If the stern reformer of Geneva could lift up his head, and hear the mitigated tone, in which some of his professed followers dispense his fearful doctrines, we fear, that he could not lie down in peace, until he had poured out his displeasure on their cowardice and degeneracy. He would tell them, with a frown, that *moderate Calvinism* was a solecism, a contradiction in terms, and would bid them in scorn to join their real friend, Arminius. Such is the power of public opinion and of an improved state of society on creeds, that naked, undisguised Calvinism is not very fond of showing itself, and many of consequence know imperfectly what it means. What then is the system against which the View of Christian Doctrines is directed?

Calvinism teaches, that, in consequence of Adam's sin in eating the forbidden fruit, God brings into life all his posterity with a nature wholly corrupt, so that they are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all that is spiritually good, and wholly inclined to all evil, and that continually. It teaches, that all mankind, having fallen in Adam, are under God's wrath

and curse, and so made liable to all miseries in this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell for ever. It teaches, that, from this ruined race, God, out of his mere good pleasure, has elected a certain number to be saved by Christ, not induced to this choice by any foresight of their faith or good works, but wholly by his free grace and love; and that, having thus predestinated them to eternal life, he renews and sanctifies them by his almighty and special agency, and brings them into a state of grace, from which they cannot fall and perish. It teaches, that the rest of mankind he is pleased to pass over, and to ordain them to dishonor and wrath for their sins, to the honor of his justice and power; in other words, he leaves the rest to the corruption in which they were born, withholds the grace which is necessary to their recovery, and condemns them to "most grievous torments in soul and body without intermission in hell-fire for ever." Such is Calvinism, as gathered from the most authentic records of the doctrine. Whoever will consult the famous Assembly's Catechisms and Confession, will see the peculiarities of the system in all their length and breadth of deformity. A man of plain sense, whose spirit has not been broken to this creed by education or terror, will think that it is not necessary for us to travel to heathen countries, to learn how mournfully the human mind may misrepresent the Deity.

The moral argument against Calvinism, of which we have spoken, must seem irresistible to common and unperverted minds, after attending to the brief statement now given. It will be asked with astonishment, How is it possible that men can hold these doctrines and yet maintain God's goodness and equity? What principles

can be more contradictory ? — To remove the objection to Calvinism, which is drawn from its repugnance to the Divine perfections, recourse has been had, as before observed, to the distinction between natural and moral inability, and to other like subtilties. But a more common reply, we conceive, has been drawn from the weakness and imperfection of the human mind, and from its incapacity of comprehending God. Calvinists will tell us, that, because a doctrine opposes our convictions of rectitude, it is not necessarily false ; that apparent are not always real inconsistencies ; that God is an infinite and incomprehensible being, and not to be tried by *our* ideas of fitness and morality ; that we bring their system to an incompetent tribunal, when we submit it to the decision of human reason and conscience ; that we are weak judges of what is right and wrong, good and evil, in the Deity ; that the happiness of the universe may require an administration of human affairs which is very offensive to limited understandings ; that we must follow revelation, not reason or moral feeling, and must consider doctrines, which shock us in revelation, as awful mysteries, which are dark through our ignorance, and which time will enlighten. How little, it is added, can man explain or understand God's ways. How inconsistent the miseries of life appear with goodness in the Creator. How prone, too, have men always been to confound good and evil, to call the just, unjust. How presumptuous is it in such a being, to sit in judgment upon God, and to question the rectitude of the divine administration, because it shocks *his* sense of rectitude. Such we conceive to be a fair statement of the manner in which the Calvinist frequently meets the objection, that his system is at war with God's attributes. Such

the reasoning by which the voice of conscience and nature is stifled, and men are reconciled to doctrines, which, if tried by the established principles of morality, would be rejected with horror. On this reasoning we purpose to offer some remarks; and we shall avail ourselves of the opportunity, to give our views of *the confidence which is due to our rational and moral faculties in religion.*

That God is infinite, and that man often errs, we affirm as strongly as our Calvinistic brethren. We desire to think humbly of ourselves, and reverently of our Creator. In the strong language of Scripture, "We now see through a glass darkly." "We cannot by searching find out God unto perfection. Clouds and darkness are round about him. His judgments are a great deep." God is great and good beyond utterance or thought. We have no disposition to idolize our own powers, or to penetrate the secret counsels of the Deity. But, on the other hand, we think it ungrateful to disparage the powers which our Creator has given us, or to question the certainty or importance of the knowledge, which he has seen fit to place within our reach. There is an affected humility, we think, as dangerous as pride. We may rate our faculties too meanly, as well as too boastingly. The worst error in religion, after all, is that of the skeptic, who records triumphantly the weaknesses and wanderings of the human intellect, and maintains, that no trust is due to the decisions of this erring reason. We by no means conceive, that man's greatest danger springs from pride of understanding, though we think as badly of this vice as other Christians. The history of the church proves, that men may trust their faculties too little as well as too much, and

that the timidity, which shrinks from investigation, has injured the mind, and betrayed the interests of Christianity, as much as an irreverent boldness of thought.

It is an important truth, which, we apprehend, has not been sufficiently developed, that the ultimate reliance of a human being is and must be on his own mind. To confide in God, we must first confide in the faculties by which He is apprehended, and by which the proofs of his existence are weighed. A trust in our ability to distinguish between truth and falsehood is implied in every act of belief; for to question this ability would of necessity unsettle all belief. We cannot take a step in reasoning or action without a secret reliance on our own minds. Religion in particular implies, that we have understandings endowed and qualified for the highest employments of intellect. In affirming the existence and perfections of God, we suppose and affirm the existence in ourselves of faculties which correspond to these sublime objects, and which are fitted to discern them. Religion is a conviction and an act of the human soul, so that, in denying confidence to the one, we subvert the truth and claims of the other. Nothing is gained to piety by degrading human nature, for in the competency of this nature to know and judge of God all piety has its foundation. Our proneness to err instructs us indeed to use our powers with great caution, but not to contemn and neglect them. The occasional abuse of our faculties, be it ever so enormous, does not prove them unfit for their highest end, which is, to form clear and consistent views of God. Because our eyes sometimes fail or deceive us, would a wise man pluck them out, or cover them with a bandage, and choose to walk and work in the dark? or, because they cannot

distinguish distant objects, can they discern nothing clearly in their proper sphere, and is sight to be pronounced a fallacious guide? Men who, to support a creed, would shake our trust in the calm, deliberate, and distinct decisions of our rational and moral powers, endanger religion more than its open foes, and forge the deadliest weapon for the infidel.

It is true that God is an infinite being, and also true, that his powers and perfections, his purposes and operations, his ends and means, being unlimited, are *incomprehensible*. In other words, they cannot be *wholly taken in* or *embraced* by the human mind. In the strong and figurative language of Scripture, we "know nothing" of God's ways; that is, we know *very few* of them. But this is just as true of the most advanced archangel as of man. In comparison with the vastness of God's system, the range of the highest created intellect is narrow; and, in this particular, man's lot does not differ from that of his elder brethren in heaven. We are both confined in our observation and experience to a little spot in the creation. But are an angel's faculties worthy of no trust, or is his knowledge uncertain, because he learns and reasons from a small part of God's works? or are his judgments respecting the Creator to be charged with presumption, because his views do not spread through the whole extent of the universe? We grant that our understandings cannot stretch beyond a very narrow sphere. But still the lessons, which we learn within this sphere, are just as sure, as if it were indefinitely enlarged. Because much is unexplored, we are not to suspect what we have actually discovered. Knowledge is not the less real, because confined. The man, who has never set foot beyond his native village,

knows its scenery and inhabitants as undoubtingly, as if he had travelled to the poles. We indeed see very little; but that little is as true, as if every thing else were seen; and our future discoveries must agree with and support it. Should the whole order and purposes of the universe be opened to us, it is certain that nothing would be disclosed, which would in any degree shake our persuasion, that the earth is inhabited by rational and moral beings, who are authorized to expect from their Creator the most benevolent and equitable government. No extent of observation can unsettle those primary and fundamental principles of moral truth, which we derive from our highest faculties operating in the relations in which God has fixed us. In every region and period of the universe, it will be as true as it is now on the earth, that knowledge and power are the measures of responsibility, and that natural incapacity absolves from guilt. These and other moral verities, which are among our clearest perceptions, would, if possible, be strengthened, in proportion as our powers should be enlarged; because harmony and consistency are the characters of God's administration, and all our researches into the universe only serve to manifest its unity, and to show a wider operation of the laws which we witness and experience on earth.

We grant that God is *incomprehensible*, in the sense already given. But he is not therefore *unintelligible*; and this distinction we conceive to be important. We do not pretend to know the *whole* nature and properties of God, but still we can form some *clear ideas* of him, and can reason from these ideas as justly as from any other. The truth is, that we cannot be said to comprehend any being whatever, not the simplest plant or

animal. All have hidden properties. Our knowledge of all is limited. But have we therefore no distinct ideas of the objects around us, and is all our reasoning about them unworthy of trust? Because God is infinite, his name is not therefore a mere sound. It is a representative of some distinct conceptions of our Creator; and these conceptions are as sure, and important, and as proper materials for the reasoning faculty, as they would be if our views were indefinitely enlarged. We cannot indeed trace God's goodness and rectitude through the whole field of his operations; but we know the essential nature of these attributes, and therefore can often judge what accords with and opposes them. God's goodness, because infinite, does not cease to be goodness, or essentially differ from the same attribute in man; nor does justice change its nature, so that it cannot be understood, because it is seated in an unbounded mind. There have indeed been philosophers, "falsely so called," who have argued from the unlimited nature of God, that we cannot ascribe to him justice and other moral attributes, in any proper or definite sense of those words; and the inference is plain, that all religion or worship, wanting an intelligible object, must be a misplaced, wasted offering. This doctrine from the infidel we reject with abhorrence; but something, not very different, too often reaches us from the mistaken Christian, who, to save his creed, shrouds the Creator in utter darkness. In opposition to both, we maintain that God's attributes are intelligible, and that we can conceive as truly of his goodness and justice, as of these qualities in men. In fact, these qualities are essentially the same in God and man, though differing in degree, in purity, and in extent of operation. We

know not and we cannot conceive of any other justice or goodness, than we learn from our own nature; and if God have not these, he is altogether unknown to us as a moral being; he offers nothing for esteem and love to rest upon; the objection of the infidel is just, that worship is wasted; "We worship we know not what."

It is asked, On what authority do we ascribe to God goodness and rectitude, in the sense in which these attributes belong to men, or how can we judge of the nature of attributes in the mind of the Creator? We answer by asking, How is it that we become acquainted with the mind of a fellow-creature? The last is as invisible, as removed from *immediate* inspection, as the first. Still we do not hesitate to speak of the justice and goodness of a neighbour; and how do we gain our knowledge? We answer, by witnessing the effects, operations, and expressions of these attributes. It is a law of our nature to argue from the effect to the cause, from the action to the agent, from the ends proposed and from the means of pursuing them, to the character and disposition of the being in whom we observe them. By these processes, we learn the invisible mind and character of man; and by the same we ascend to the mind of God, whose works, effects, operations, and ends are as expressive and significant of justice and goodness, as the best and most decisive actions of men. If this reasoning be sound (and all religion rests upon it,) then God's justice and goodness are intelligible attributes, agreeing essentially with the same qualities in ourselves. Their operation indeed is infinitely wider, and they are employed in accomplishing not only immediate but remote and unknown ends. Of consequence, we must expect that many parts of the divine adminis-

tration will be *obscure*, that is, will not produce *immediate* good, and an *immediate* distinction between virtue and vice. But still the unbounded operation of these attributes does not change their nature. They are still the same, as if they acted in the narrowest sphere. We can still determine in many cases what does not accord with them. We are particularly sure that those essential principles of justice, which enter into and even form our conception of this attribute, must pervade every province and every period of the administration of a just being, and that to suppose the Creator in any instance to forsake them, is to charge him directly with unrighteousness, however loudly the lips may compliment his equity.

"But is it not presumptuous in man," it is continually said, "to sit in judgment on God?" We answer, that to "sit in judgment on God" is an ambiguous and offensive phrase, conveying to common minds the ideas of irreverence, boldness, familiarity. The question would be better stated thus;—Is it not presumptuous in man to judge concerning God, and concerning what agrees or disagrees with his attributes? We answer confidently, No; for in many cases we are competent and even bound to judge. And we plead first in our defence the Scriptures. How continually does God in his word appeal to the understanding and moral judgment of man. "O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, between me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it." We observe, in the next place, that all religion supposes and is built on judgments passed by us on God and on his operations. Is it not, for example, our duty and a leading part of piety to *praise* God;

And what is praising a being, but to adjudge and ascribe to him just and generous deeds and motives? And of what value is praise, except from those, who are capable of distinguishing between actions which exalt and actions which degrade the character? Is it presumption to call God *excellent?* And what is this, but to refer his character to a standard of excellence, to try it by the established principles of rectitude, and to pronounce its conformity to them; that is, to judge of God and his operations?

We are presumptuous, we are told, in judging of our Creator. But he himself has made this our duty, in giving us a moral faculty; and to decline it, is to violate the primary law of our nature. Conscience, the sense of right, the power of perceiving moral distinctions, the power of discerning between justice and injustice, excellence and baseness, is the highest faculty given us by God, the whole foundation of our responsibility, and our sole capacity for religion. Now we are forbidden by this faculty to love a being, who wants, or who fails to discover, moral excellence. God, in giving us conscience, has implanted a principle within us, which forbids us to prostrate ourselves before mere power, or to offer praise where we do not discover worth; a principle, which challenges our supreme homage for supreme goodness, and which absolves us from guilt, when we abhor a severe and unjust administration. Our Creator has consequently waved his own claims on our veneration and obedience, any farther than he discovers himself to us in characters of benevolence, equity, and righteousness. He rests his authority on the perfect coincidence of his will and government with those great and fundamental principles of morality written on our

souls. He desires no worship, but that which springs from the exercise of our moral faculties upon his character, from our discernment and persuasion of his rectitude and goodness. He asks, he accepts, no love or admiration but from those, who can understand the nature and the proofs of moral excellence.

There are two or three striking facts, which show that there is no presumption in judging of God, and of what agrees or disagrees with his attributes. The first fact is, that the most intelligent and devout men have often employed themselves in proving the existence and perfections of God, and have been honored for this service to the cause of religion. Now we ask, what is meant by the *proofs* of a divine perfection? They are certain acts, operations, and methods of government, which are proper and natural effects, signs, and expressions of this perfection, and from which, according to the established principles of reasoning, it may be inferred. To prove the divine attributes is to collect and arrange those works and ways of the Creator, which accord with these attributes, correspond to them, flow from them, and express them. Of consequence, to prove them requires and implies *the power of judging of what agrees with them*, of discerning their proper marks and expressions. All our treatises on natural theology rest on this power. Every argument in support of a divine perfection is an exercise of it. To deny it, is to overthrow all religion.

Now if such are the proofs of God's goodness and justice, and if we are capable of discerning them, then we are not necessarily presumptuous, when we say of particular measures ascribed to him, that they are inconsistent with his attributes, and cannot belong to him.

There is plainly no more presumption in affirming of certain principles of administration, that they oppose God's equity and would prove him unrighteous, than to affirm of others, that they prove him upright and good. There are signs and evidences of injustice as unequivocal as those of justice ; and our faculties are as adequate to the perception of the last as of the first. If they must not be trusted in deciding what would prove God unjust, they are unworthy of confidence when they gather evidences of his rectitude ; and of course, the whole structure of religion must fall.

It is no slight objection to the mode of reasoning adopted by the Calvinist, that it renders the proof of the divine attributes impossible. When we object to his representations of the divine government, that they shock our clearest ideas of goodness and justice, he replies, that still they may be true, because we know very little of God, and what seems unjust to man, may be in the Creator the perfection of rectitude. Now this weapon has a double edge. If the strongest marks and expressions of injustice do not prove God unjust, then the strongest marks of the opposite character do not prove him righteous. If the first do not deserve confidence, because of our narrow views of God, neither do the last. If, when more shall be known, the first may be found consistent with perfect rectitude, so, when more shall be known, the last may be found consistent with infinite malignity and oppression. This reasoning of our opponents casts us on an ocean of awful uncertainty. Admit it, and we have no proofs of God's goodness and equity to rely upon. What we call proofs, may be mere appearances, which a wider knowledge of God may reverse. The future may show

us, that the very laws and works of the Creator, from which we now infer his kindness, are consistent with the most determined purpose to spread infinite misery and guilt, and were intended, by raising hope, to add the agony of disappointment to our other woes. Why may not these anticipations, horrible as they are, be verified by the unfolding of God's system, if our reasonings about his attributes are rendered so very uncertain, as Calvinism teaches, by the infinity of his nature?

We have mentioned one fact to show that it is not presumptuous to judge of God, and of what accords with and opposes his attributes; namely, the fact that his attributes are thought susceptible of proof. Another fact, very decisive on this point, is, that Christians of all classes have concurred in resting the truth of Christianity in a great degree on its *internal* evidence, that is, on its accordance with the perfections of God. How common is it to hear from religious teachers, that Christianity is worthy of a good and righteous being, that it bears the marks of a divine original. Volumes have been written on its internal proofs, on the coincidence of its purposes and spirit with our highest conceptions of God. How common too is it, to say of other religions, that they are at war with the divine nature, with God's rectitude and goodness, and that we want no other proofs of their falsehood. And what does all this reasoning imply? Clearly this, that we are capable of determining, in many cases, what is worthy and what is unworthy of God, what accords with and what opposes his moral attributes. Deny us this capacity, and it would be no presumption against a professed revelation, that it ascribed to the Supreme Being the most detest-

able practices. It might still be said in support of such a system, that it is arrogant in man to determine what kind of revelation suits the character of the Creator. Christianity then leans, at least in part, and some think chiefly, on internal evidence, or on its agreeableness to God's moral attributes; and is it probable, that this religion, having this foundation, contains representations of God's government which shock our ideas of rectitude, and that it silences our objections by telling us, that we are no judges of what suits or opposes his infinite nature?

We will name one more fact to show, that it is not presumptuous to form these judgments of the Creator. All Christians are accustomed to reason from God's attributes, and to use them as tests of doctrines. In their controversies with one another, they spare no pains to show, that their particular views accord best with the divine perfections, and every sect labors to throw on its adversaries the odium of maintaining what is unworthy of God. Theological writings are filled with such arguments; and yet *we*, it seems, are guilty of awful presumption, when we deny of God principles of administration, against which every pure and good sentiment in our breasts rises in abhorrence.

We shall conclude this discussion with an important inquiry. If God's justice and goodness are consistent with those operations and modes of government, which Calvinism ascribes to him, of what use is our belief in these perfections? What expectations can we found upon them? If it consist with divine rectitude to consign to everlasting misery, beings who have come guilty and impotent from his hand, we beg to know what interest we have in this rectitude, what pledge of good

it contains, or what evil can be imagined which may not be its natural result? If justice and goodness, when stretched to infinity, take such strange forms and appear in such unexpected and apparently inconsistent operations, how are we sure, that they will not give up the best men to ruin, and leave the universe to the powers of darkness? Such results indeed seem incompatible with these attributes, but not more so than the acts attributed to God by Calvinism. Is it said, that the divine faithfulness is pleged in the Scriptures to a happier issue of things? But why should not divine faithfulness transcend our poor understandings as much as divine goodness and justice, and why may not God, consistently with this attribute, crush every hope which his word has raised? Thus all the divine perfections are lost to us as grounds of encouragement and consolation, if we maintain, that their infinity places them beyond our judgment, and that we must expect from them measures and operations entirely opposed to what seems to us most accordant with their nature.

We have thus endeavoured to show, that the testimony of our rational and moral faculties against Calvinism is worthy of trust. — We know that this reasoning will be met by the question, What then becomes of Christianity? for this religion plainly teaches the doctrines you have condemned. Our answer is ready. Christianity contains no such doctrines. Christianity, reason, and conscience are perfectly harmonious on the subject under discussion. Our religion, fairly construed, gives no countenance to that system, which has arrogated to itself the distinction of Evangelical. We cannot, however, enter this field at present. We will only say, that the general spirit of Christianity affords a very strong presumption,

that its records teach no such doctrines as we have opposed. This spirit is love, charity, benevolence. Christianity, we all agree, is designed to manifest God as perfect benevolence, and to bring men to love and imitate him. Now is it probable, that a religion, having this object, gives views of the Supreme Being, from which our moral convictions and benevolent sentiments shrink with horror, and which, if made our pattern, would convert us into monsters! It is plain, that, were a human parent to form himself on the universal Father, as described by Calvinism, that is, were he to bring his children into life totally depraved, and then to pursue them with endless punishment, we should charge him with a cruelty not surpassed in the annals of the world; or, were a sovereign to incapacitate his subjects in any way whatever for obeying his laws, and then to torture them in dungeons of perpetual woe, we should say, that history records no darker crime. And is it probable, that a religion, which aims to attract and assimilate us to God, considered as love, should hold him up to us in these heart-withering characters? We may confidently expect to find in such a system the brightest views of the divine nature; and the same objections lie against interpretations of its records, which savour of cruelty and injustice, as lie against the literal sense of passages which ascribe to God bodily wants and organs. Let the Scriptures be read with a recollection of the spirit of Christianity, and with that modification of particular texts by this general spirit, which a just criticism requires, and Calvinism would no more enter the mind of the reader, than Popery, we had almost said, than Heathenism.

In the remarks now made, it will be seen, we hope,

that we have aimed to expose doctrines, not to condemn their professors. It is true, that men are apt to think themselves assailed, when their system only is called to account. But we have no foe but error. We are less and less disposed to measure the piety of others by peculiarities of faith. Men's characters are determined, not by the opinions which they profess, but by those on which their thoughts habitually fasten, which recur to them most forcibly, and which color their ordinary views of God and duty. The creed of habit, imitation, or fear, may be defended stoutly, and yet have little practical influence. The mind, when compelled by education or other circumstances to receive irrational doctrines, has yet a power of keeping them, as it were, on its surface, of excluding them from its depths, of refusing to incorporate them with its own being; and, when burdened with a mixed, incongruous system, it often discovers a sagacity, which reminds us of the instinct of inferior animals, in selecting the healthful and nutritious portions, and in making them its daily food. Accordingly the real faith often corresponds little with that which is professed. It often happens, that, through the progress of the mind in light and virtue, opinions, once central, are gradually thrown outward, lose their vitality, and cease to be principles of action, whilst through habit they are defended as articles of faith. The words of the creed survive, but its advocates sympathize with it little more than its foes. These remarks are particularly applicable to the present subject. A large number, perhaps a majority of those, who surname themselves with the name of Calvin, have little more title to it than ourselves. They keep the name, and drop the principles which it signifies. They adhere to the system as

a whole, but shrink from all its parts and distinguishing points. This silent but real defection from Calvinism is spreading more and more widely. The grim features of this system are softening, and its stern spirit yielding to conciliation and charity. We beg our readers to consult for themselves the two Catechisms and the Confession of the Westminster Assembly, and to compare these standards of Calvinism, with what now bears its name. They will rejoice, we doubt not, in the triumphs of truth. With these views, we have no disposition to disparage the professors of the system which we condemn, although we believe that its influence is yet so extensive and pernicious as to bind us to oppose it.

Calvinism, we are persuaded, is giving place to better views. It has passed its meridian, and is sinking, to rise no more. It has to contend with foes more formidable than theologians, with foes, from whom it cannot shield itself in mystery and metaphysical subtilties, we mean with the progress of the human mind, and with the progress of the spirit of the Gospel. Society is going forward in intelligence and charity, and of course is leaving the theology of the sixteenth century behind it. We hail this revolution of opinion as a most auspicious event to the Christian cause. We hear much at present of efforts to spread the Gospel. But Christianity is gaining more by the removal of degrading errors, than it would by armies of missionaries who should carry with them a corrupted form of the religion. We think the decline of Calvinism one of the most encouraging facts in our passing history; for this system, by outraging conscience and reason, tends to array these high faculties against revelation. Its errors are peculiarly mournful, because they relate to the character of

God. It darkens and stains his pure nature; spoils his character of its sacredness, loveliness, glory; and thus quenches the central light of the universe, makes existence a curse, and the extinction of it a consummation devoutly to be wished. We now speak of the *peculiarities* of this system, and of their natural influence, when not counteracted, as they always are in a greater or less degree, by better views, derived from the spirit and plain lessons of Christianity.

We have had so much to do with our subject, that we have neglected to make the usual extracts from the book which we proposed to review. We earnestly wish, that a work, answering to the title of this, which should give us "a general view of Christian doctrines," might be undertaken by a powerful hand. Next to a good commentary on the Scriptures, it would be the best service which could be rendered to Christian truth.

# REMARKS

ON

# NATIONAL LITERATURE.

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REVIEW of a Discourse concerning the INFLUENCE OF AMERICA ON THE MIND; being the Annual Oration delivered before the American Philosophical Society, at the University in Philadelphia, October 18, 1823. By C. J. Ingersoll.

WE shall use the work prefixed to this article, as ministers are sometimes said to use their texts. We shall make it a point to start from, not the subject of our remarks. Our purpose is to treat of the importance and means of a National Literature. The topic seems to us a great one, and to have intimate connexions with morals and religion, as well as with all our public interests. Our views will be given with great freedom, and, if they serve no other purpose than to recommend the subject to more general attention, one of our principal objects will be accomplished.

We begin with stating what we mean by national literature. We mean the expression of a nation's mind in writing. We mean the production among a people of important works in philosophy, and in the departments of imagination and taste. We mean the contri-

butions of new truths to the stock of human knowledge. We mean the thoughts of profound and original minds, elaborated by the toil of composition, and fixed and made immortal in books. We mean the manifestation of a nation's intellect in the only forms by which it can multiply itself at home, and send itself abroad. We mean that a nation shall take a place, by its authors, among the lights of the world. It will be seen, that we include under literature all the writings of superior minds, be the subjects what they may. We are aware that the term is often confined to compositions which relate to human nature, and human life; that it is not generally extended to physical science; that mind, not matter, is regarded as its main subject and sphere. But the worlds of matter and mind are too intimately connected to admit of exact partition. All the objects of human thought flow into one another. Moral and physical truths have many bonds and analogies, and, whilst the former are the chosen and noblest themes of literature, we are not anxious to divorce them from the latter, or to shut them up in a separate department. The expression of superior mind in writing, we regard, then, as a nation's literature. We regard its gifted men, whether devoted to the exact sciences, to mental and ethical philosophy, to history and legislation, or to fiction and poetry, as forming a noble intellectual brotherhood, and it is for the purpose of quickening all to join their labors for the public good, that we offer the present plea in behalf of a national literature.

To show the importance which we attach to the subject, we begin with some remarks on what we deem the distinction which a nation should most earnestly covet. We believe, that more distinct apprehensions on this

point are needed, and that, for want of them, the work of improvement is carried on with less energy, consistency, and wisdom, than may and should be brought to bear upon it. The great distinction of a country, then, is, that it produces superior men. Its natural advantages are not to be disdained. But they are of secondary importance. No matter what races of animals a country breeds. The great question is, Does it breed a noble race of men? No matter what its soil may be. The great question is, How far is it prolific of moral and intellectual power? No matter how stern its climate is, if it nourish force of thought and virtuous purpose. These are the products by which a country is to be tried, and institutions have value only by the impulse which they give to the mind. It has sometimes been said, that the noblest men grow where nothing else will grow. This we do not believe, for mind is not the creature of climate or soil. But were it true, we should say, that it were better to live among rocks and sands, than in the most genial and productive region on the face of the earth.

As yet, the great distinction of a nation on which we have insisted, has been scarcely recognised. The idea of forming a superior race of men has entered little into schemes of policy. Invention and effort have been expended on matter, much more than on mind. Lofty piles have been reared; the earth has groaned under pyramids and palaces. The thought of building up a nobler order of intellect and character, has hardly crossed the most adventurous statesman. We beg that we may not be misapprehended. We offer these remarks to correct what we deem a disproportioned attention to physical good, and not at all to condemn the

expenditure of ingenuity and strength on the outward world. There is a harmony between all our great interests, between inward and outward improvements; and, by establishing among them a wise order, all will be secured. We have no desire to shut up man in his own spiritual nature. The mind was made to act on matter, and it grows by expressing itself in material forms. We believe, too, that, in proportion as it shall gain intellectual and moral power, it will exert itself with increased energy and delight on the outward creation; will pour itself forth more freely in useful and ornamental arts; will rear more magnificent structures, and will call forth new beauties in nature. An intelligent and resolute spirit in a community, perpetually extends its triumphs over matter. It can even subject to itself the most unpromising region. Holland, diked from the ocean, — Venice, rising amidst the waves, — and New England, bleak and rock-bound New England, converted by a few generations from a wilderness into smiling fields and opulent cities, — point us to the mind as the great source of physical good, and teach us, that, in making the culture of man our highest end, we shall not retard, but advance, the cultivation of nature.

The question which we most solicitously ask about this country is, what race of men it is likely to produce. We consider its liberty of value only as far as it favors the growth of men. What is liberty? The removal of restraint from human powers. Its benefit is, that it opens new fields for action, and a wider range for the mind. The only freedom worth possessing, is that which gives enlargement to a people's energy, intellect, and virtues. The savage makes his boast of freedom. But what is its worth? Free as he is, he

continues for ages in the same ignorance, leads the same comfortless life, sees the same untamed wilderness spread around him. He is indeed free from what he calls the yoke of civil institutions. But other and worse chains bind him. The very privation of civil government is in effect a chain; for, by withholding protection from property, it virtually shackles the arm of industry, and forbids exertion for the melioration of his lot. Progress, the growth of power, is the end and boon of liberty; and, without this, a people may have the name, but want the substance and spirit of freedom.

We are the more earnest in enlarging on these views, because we feel that our attachment to our country must be very much proportioned to what we deem its tendency to form a generous race of men. We pretend not to have thrown off national feeling; but we have some stronger feelings. We love our country much, but mankind more. As men and Christians, our first desire is to see the improvement of human nature. We desire to see the soul of man wiser, firmer, nobler, more conscious of its imperishable treasures, more beneficent and powerful, more alive to its connexion with God, more able to use pleasure and prosperity aright, and more victorious over poverty, adversity, and pain. In our survey of our own and other countries, the great question which comes to us is this, Where and under what institutions are men most likely to advance? Where are the soundest minds and the purest hearts formed? What nation possesses, in its history, its traditions, its government, its religion, its manners, its pursuits, its relations to other communities, and especially in its private and public means of education, the instruments and pledges of a more resolute virtue and devo-

tion to truth, than we now witness? Such a nation, be it where it may, will engage our warmest interest. We love our country, but not blindly. In all nations we recognise one great family, and our chief wish for our native land is, that it may take the first rank among the lights and benefactors of the human race.

These views will explain the vast importance which we attach to a national literature. By this, as we have said, we understand the expression of a nation's mind in writing. It is the action of the most gifted understandings on the community. It throws into circulation through a wide sphere the most quickening and beautiful thoughts, which have grown up in men of laborious study or creative genius. It is a much higher work than the communication of a gifted intellect in discourse. It is the mind giving to multitudes whom no voice can reach, its compressed and selected thoughts, in the most lucid order and attractive forms which it is capable of inventing. In other words, literature is the concentration of intellect for the purpose of spreading itself abroad and multiplying its energy.

Such being the nature of literature, it is plainly among the most powerful methods of exalting the character of a nation, of forming a better race of men; in truth, we apprehend that it may claim the first rank among the means of improvement. We know nothing so fitted to the advancement of society, as to bring its higher minds to bear upon the multitude; as to establish close connexions between the more and less gifted; as to spread far and wide the light which springs up in meditative, profound, and sublime understandings. It is the ordinance of God, and one of his most benevolent laws, that the human race should be carried

forward by impulses which originate in a few minds, perhaps in an individual; and in this way the most interesting relations and dependencies of life are framed. When a great truth is to be revealed, it does not flash at once on the race, but dawns and brightens on a superior understanding, from which it is to emanate and to illumine future ages. On the faithfulness of great minds to this awful function, the progress and happiness of men chiefly depend. The most illustrious benefactors of the race have been men, who, having risen to great truths, have held them as a sacred trust for their kind, and have borne witness to them amidst general darkness, under scorn and persecution, perhaps in the face of death. Such men, indeed, have not always made contributions to literature, for their condition has not allowed them to be authors; but we owe the transmission, perpetuity, and immortal power of their new and high thoughts, to kindred spirits, which have concentrated and fixed them in books.

The quickening influences of literature need not be urged on those who are familiar with the history of modern Europe, and who of course know the spring given to the human mind by the revival of ancient learning. Through their writings, the great men of antiquity have exercised a sovereignty over these later ages, not enjoyed in their own. It is more important to observe, that the influence of literature is perpetually increasing; for, through the press and the spread of education, its sphere is indefinitely enlarged. Reading, once the privilege of a few, is now the occupation of multitudes, and is to become one of the chief gratifications of all. Books penetrate everywhere, and some of the works of genius find their way to obscure dwellings, which, a

little while ago, seemed barred against all intellectual light. Writing is now the mightiest instrument on earth. Through this, the mind has acquired a kind of omnipresence. To literature we then look, as the chief means of forming a better race of human beings. To superior minds, which may act through this, we look for the impulses, by which their country is to be carried forward. We would teach them, that they are the depositaries of the highest power on earth, and that on them the best hopes of society rest.

We are aware that some may think, that we are exalting intellectual above moral and religious influence. They may tell us that the teaching of moral and religious truth, not by philosophers and boasters of wisdom, but by the comparatively weak and foolish, is the great means of renovating the world. This truth we indeed regard as "the power of God unto salvation." But let none imagine that its chosen temple is an uncultivated mind, and that it selects, as its chief organs, the lips of the unlearned. Religious and moral truth is indeed appointed to carry forward mankind; but not as conceived and expounded by narrow minds, not as darkened by the ignorant, not as debased by the superstitious, not as subtilized by the visionary, not as thundered out by the intolerant fanatic, not as turned into a drivelling cant by the hypocrite. Like all other truths, it requires for its full reception and powerful communication, a free and vigorous intellect. Indeed, its grandeur and infinite connexions demand a more earnest and various use of our faculties than any other subject. As a single illustration of this remark, we may observe, that all moral and religious truth may be reduced to one great and central thought, Perfection of Mind; a thought

which comprehends all that is glorious in the Divine nature, and which reveals to us the end and happiness of our own existence. This perfection has as yet only dawned on the most gifted human beings, and the great purpose of our present and future existence is, to enlarge our conceptions of it without end, and to embody and make them manifest in character and life. And is this sublime thought to grow within us, to refine itself from error and impure mixture, to receive perpetual accessions of brightness from the study of God, man, and nature, and especially to be communicated powerfully to others, without the vigorous exertion of our intellectual nature? Religion has been wronged by nothing more, than by being separated from intellect; than by being removed from the province of reason and free research, into that of mystery and authority, of impulse and feeling. Hence it is, that the prevalent forms or exhibitions of Christianity are comparatively inert, and that most which is written on the subject is of little or no worth. Christianity was given, not to contradict and degrade the rational nature, but to call it forth, to enlarge its range and its powers. It admits of endless developement. It is the last truth which should remain stationary. It ought to be so explored and so expressed, as to take the highest place in a nation's literature, as to exalt and purify all other literature. From these remarks it will be seen, that the efficacy which we have ascribed to literary or intellectual influence in the work of human improvement, is consistent with the supreme importance of moral and religious truth.

If we have succeeded in conveying the impressions which we have aimed to make, our readers are now prepared to inquire with interest into the condition and

prospects of literature among ourselves. Do we possess, indeed, what may be called a national literature? Have we produced eminent writers in the various departments of intellectual effort? Are our chief resources of instruction and literary enjoyment furnished from ourselves? We regret that the reply to these questions is so obvious. The few standard works which we have produced, and which promise to live, can hardly, by any courtesy, be denominated a national literature. On this point, if marks and proofs of our real condition were needed, we should find them in the current apologies for our deficiencies. Our writers are accustomed to plead in our excuse, our youth, the necessities of a newly settled country, and the direction of our best talents to practical life. Be the pleas sufficient or not, one thing they prove, and that is, our consciousness of having failed to make important contributions to the interests of the intellect. We have few names to place by the side of the great names in science and literature on the other side of the ocean. We want those lights which make a country conspicuous at a distance. Let it not be said, that European envy denies our just claims. In an age like this, when the literary world forms a great family, and the products of mind are circulated more rapidly than those of machinery, it is a nation's own fault, if its name be not pronounced with honor beyond itself. We have ourselves heard, and delighted to hear, beyond the Alps, our country designated as the land of Franklin. This name had scaled that mighty barrier, and made us known where our institutions and modes of life were hardly better understood than those of the natives of our forests.

We are accustomed to console ourselves for the ab-

sence of a commanding literature, by urging our superiority to other nations in our institutions for the diffusion of elementary knowledge through all classes of the community. We have here just cause for boasting, though perhaps less than we imagine. That there are gross deficiencies in our common schools, and that the amount of knowledge which they communicate, when compared with the time spent in its acquisition, is lamentably small, the community begin to feel. There is a crying need for a higher and more quickening kind of instruction than the laboring part of society have yet received, and we rejoice that the cry begins to be heard. But, allowing our elementary institutions to be ever so perfect, we confess that they do not satisfy us. We want something more. A dead level of intellect, even if it should rise above what is common in other nations, would not answer our wishes and hopes for our country. We want great minds to be formed among us, minds which shall be felt afar, and through which we may act on the world. We want the human intellect to do its utmost here. We want this people to obtain a claim on the gratitude of the human race, by adding strength to the foundation, and fulness and splendor to the developement of moral and religious truth; by originality of thought, by discoveries of science, and by contributions to the refining pleasures of taste and imagination.

With these views we do and must lament, that, however we surpass other nations in providing for, and spreading elementary instruction, we fall behind many in provision for the liberal training of the intellect, for forming great scholars, for communicating that profound knowledge, and that thirst for higher truths, which can alone originate a commanding literature. The truth ought to

be known. There is among us much superficial knowledge, but little severe, persevering research; little of that consuming passion for new truth, which makes outward things worthless; little resolute devotion to a high intellectual culture. There is nowhere a literary atmosphere, or such an accumulation of literary influence, as determines the whole strength of the mind to its own enlargement, and to the manifestation of itself in enduring forms. Few among us can be said to have followed out any great subject of thought patiently, laboriously, so as to know thoroughly what others have discovered and taught concerning it, and thus to occupy a ground from which new views may be gained. Of course, exceptions are to be found. This country has produced original and profound thinkers. We have named Franklin, and we may name Edwards, one of the greatest men of his age, though unhappily his mind was lost, in a great degree, to literature, and we fear to religion, by vassalage to a false theology. His work on the Will throws, indeed, no light on human nature, and, notwithstanding the nobleness of the subject, gives no great or elevated thoughts; but, as a specimen of logical acuteness and controversial power, it certainly ranks in the very highest class of metaphysical writings. We might also name living authors who do honor to their country. Still, we may say, we chiefly prize what has been done among us, as a promise of higher and more extensive effort. Patriotism, as well as virtue, forbids us to burn incense to national vanity. The truth should be seen and felt. In an age of great intellectual activity, we rely chiefly for intellectual excitement and enjoyment on foreign minds, nor is our own mind felt abroad. Whilst clamoring against dependence on European manufac-

tures, we contentedly rely on Europe for the nobler and more important fabrics of the intellect. We boast of our political institutions, and receive our chief teachings, books, impressions, from the school of monarchy. True, we labor under disadvantages. But, if our liberty deserves the praise which it receives, it is more than a balance for these. We believe that it is. We believe that it does open to us an indefinite intellectual progress. Did we not so regard it, we should value it little. If hereditary governments minister most to the growth of the mind, it were better to restore them than to cling to a barren freedom. Let us not expose liberty to this reproach. Let us prove, by more generous provisions for the diffusion of elementary knowledge, for the training of great minds, and for the joint culture of the moral and intellectual powers, that we are more and more instructed, by freedom, in the worth and greatness of human nature, and in the obligation of contributing to its strength and glory.

We have spoken of the condition of our literature. We now proceed to the consideration of the causes which obstruct its advancement; and we are immediately struck by one so prevalent, as to deserve distinct notice. We refer to the common doctrine, that we need, in this country, useful knowledge, rather than profound, extensive, and elegant literature, and that this last, if we covet it, may be imported from abroad in such variety and abundance, as to save us the necessity of producing it among ourselves. How far are these opinions just? This question we purpose to answer.

That useful knowledge should receive our first and chief care, we mean not to dispute. But in our views of utility, we may differ from some who take this po-

sition. There are those who confine this term to the necessaries and comforts of life, and to the means of producing them. And is it true, that we need no knowledge, but that which clothes and feeds us? Is it true, that all studies may be dispensed with, but such as teach us to act on matter, and to turn it to our use? Happily, human nature is too stubborn to yield to this narrow utility. It is interesting to observe how the very mechanical arts, which are especially designed to minister to the necessities and comforts of life, are perpetually passing these limits; how they disdain to stop at mere convenience. A large and increasing proportion of mechanical labor is given to the gratification of an elegant taste. How simple would be the art of building, if it limited itself to the construction of a comfortable shelter! How many ships should we dismantle, and how many busy trades put to rest, were dress and furniture reduced to the standard of convenience! This "utility" would work a great change in town and country, would level to the dust the wonders of architecture, would annihilate the fine arts, and blot out innumerable beauties, which the hand of taste has spread over the face of the earth. Happily, human nature is too strong for the utilitarian. It cannot satisfy itself with the convenient. No passion unfolds itself sooner than the love of the ornamental. The savage decorates his person, and the child is more struck with the beauty than the uses of its raiment. So far from limiting ourselves to convenient food and raiment, we enjoy but little a repast which is not arranged with some degree of order and taste; and a man who should consult comfort alone in his wardrobe, would find himself an unwelcome guest in circles which he would very reluctantly forego. We

are aware that the propensity to which we have referred, often breaks out in extravagance and ruinous luxury. We know that the love of ornament is often vitiated by vanity, and that, when so perverted, it impairs, sometimes destroys, the soundness and simplicity of the mind and the relish for true glory. Still it teaches, even in its excesses, that the idea of beauty is an indestructible principle of our nature, and this single truth is enough to put us on our guard against vulgar notions of utility.

We have said that we prize, as highly as any, useful knowledge. But by this we mean knowledge which answers and ministers to our complex and various nature; we mean that which is useful, not only to the animal man, but to the intellectual, moral, and religious man; useful to a being of spiritual faculties, whose happiness is to be found in their free and harmonious exercise. We grant, that there is primary necessity for that information and skill by which subsistence is earned, and life is preserved; for it is plain that we must live, in order to act and improve. But life is the means; action and improvement the end; and who will deny that the noblest utility belongs to that knowledge, by which the chief purpose of our creation is accomplished? According to these views, a people should honor and cultivate, as unspeakably useful, that literature which corresponds to, and calls forth, the highest faculties; which expresses and communicates energy of thought, fruitfulness of invention, force of moral purpose, a thirst for the true, and a delight in the beautiful. According to these views, we attach special importance to those branches of literature which relate to human nature, and which give it a consciousness of its own powers. History has a noble use, for it shows us human beings in

various and opposite conditions, in their strength and weakness, in their progress and relapses, and thus reveals the causes and means by which the happiness and virtue of the race may be enlarged. Poetry is useful, by touching deep springs in the human soul; by giving voice to its more delicate feelings; by breathing out, and making more intelligible, the sympathy which subsists between the mind and the outward universe; by creating beautiful forms of manifestations for great moral truths. Above all, that higher philosophy, which treats of the intellectual and moral constitution of man, of the foundation of knowledge, of duty, of perfection, of our relations to the spiritual world, and especially to God; this has a usefulness so peculiar as to throw other departments of knowledge into obscurity; and a people, among whom this does not find honor, has little ground to boast of its superiority to uncivilized tribes. It will be seen from these remarks, that utility, with us, has a broad meaning. In truth, we are slow to condemn as useless, any researches or discoveries of original and strong minds, even when we discern in them no bearing on any interests of mankind; for all truth is of a prolific nature, and has connexions not immediately perceived; and it may be, that what we call vain speculations, may, at no distant period, link themselves with some new facts or theories, and guide a profound thinker to the most important results. The ancient mathematician, when absorbed in solitary thought, little imagined that his theorems, after the lapse of ages, were to be applied by the mind of Newton to the solution of the mysteries of the universe, and not only to guide the astronomer through the heavens, but the navigator through the pathless ocean. For ourselves, we incline to hope much

from truths, which are particularly decried as useless; for the noblest and most useful truth is of an abstract or universal nature; and yet the abstract, though susceptible of infinite application, is generally, as we know, opposed to the practical.

We maintain, that a people, which has any serious purpose of taking a place among improved communities, should studiously promote within itself every variety of intellectual exertion. It should resolve strenuously to be surpassed by none. It should feel that mind is the creative power, through which all the resources of nature are to be turned to account, and by which a people is to spread its influence, and establish the noblest form of empire. It should train within itself men able to understand and to use whatever is thought and discovered over the whole earth. The whole mass of human knowledge should exist among a people, not in neglected libraries, but in its higher minds. Among its most cherished institutions, should be those, which will ensure to it ripe scholars, explorers of ancient learning, profound historians and mathematicians, intellectual laborers devoted to physical and moral science, and to the creation of a refined and beautiful literature.

Let us not be misunderstood. We have no desire to rear in our country a race of pedants, of solemn triflers, of laborious commentators on the mysteries of a Greek accent or a rusty coin. We would have men explore antiquity, not to bury themselves in its dust, but to learn its spirit, and so to commune with its superior minds, as to accumulate on the present age, the influences of whatever was great and wise in former times. What we want is, that those among us, whom God has gifted to comprehend whatever is now known,

and to rise to new truths, may find aids and institutions to fit them for their high calling, and may become at once springs of a higher intellectual life to their own country, and joint workers with the great of all nations and times in carrying forward their race.

We know that it will be said, that foreign scholars, bred under institutions which this country cannot support, may do our intellectual work, and send us books and learning to meet our wants. To this we have much to answer. In the first place, we reply, that, to avail ourselves of the higher literature of other nations, we must place ourselves on a level with them. The products of foreign machinery we can use, without any portion of the skill that produced them. But works of taste and genius, and profound investigations of philosophy, can only be estimated and enjoyed through a culture and power corresponding to that from which they sprung.

In the next place, we maintain, that it is an immense gain to a people, to have in its own bosom, among its own sons, men of distinguished intellect. Such men give a spring and life to a community by their presence, their society, their fame; and what deserves remark, such men are nowhere so felt as in a republic like our own; for here the different classes of society flow together and act powerfully on each other, and a free communication, elsewhere unknown, is established between the gifted few and the many. It is one of the many good fruits of liberty, that it increases the diffusiveness of intellect; and accordingly a free country is, above all others, false to itself, in withholding from its superior minds the means of enlargement.

We next observe, and we think the observation im-

portant, that the facility with which we receive the literature of foreign countries, instead of being a reason for neglecting our own, is a strong motive for its cultivation. We mean not to be paradoxical, but we believe that it would be better to admit no books from abroad, than to make them substitutes for our own intellectual activity. The more we receive from other countries, the greater the need of an original literature. A people, into whose minds the thoughts of foreigners are poured perpetually, needs an energy within itself to resist, to modify this mighty influence, and, without it, will inevitably sink under the worst bondage, will become intellectually tame and enslaved. We have certainly no desire to complete our restrictive system, by adding to it a literary non-intercourse law. We rejoice in the increasing intellectual connexion between this country and the old world. But sooner would we rupture it, than see our country sitting passively at the feet of foreign teachers. It were better to have no literature, than form ourselves unresistingly on a foreign one. The true sovereigns of a country are those who determine its mind, its modes of thinking, its tastes, its principles; and we cannot consent to lodge this sovereignty in the hands of strangers. A country, like an individual, has dignity and power only in proportion as it is self-formed. There is a great stir to secure to ourselves the manufacturing of our own clothing. We say, let others spin and weave for us, but let them not think for us. A people, whose government and laws are nothing but the embodying of public opinion, should jealously guard this opinion against foreign dictation. We need a literature to counteract, and to use wisely the literature which we import. We need an inward power proportionate

to that which is exerted on us, as the means of self-subsistence. It is particularly true of a people, whose institutions demand for their support a free and bold spirit, that they should be able to subject to a manly and independent criticism, whatever comes from abroad. These views seem to us to deserve serious attention. We are more and more a reading people. Books are already among the most powerful influences here. The question is, shall Europe, through these, fashion us after its pleasure? Shall America be only an echo of what is thought and written under the aristocracies beyond the ocean?

Another view of the subject is this. A foreign literature will always, in a measure, be foreign. It has sprung from the soul of another people, which, however like, is still not our own soul. Every people has much in its own character and feelings, which can only be embodied by its own writers, and which, when transfused through literature, makes it touching and true, like the voice of our earliest friend.

We now proceed to an argument in favor of native literature, which, if less obvious, is, we believe, not less sound than those now already adduced. We have hitherto spoken of literature as the expression, the communication, of the higher minds in a community. We now add, that it does much more than is commonly supposed, to *form* such minds, so that, without it, a people wants one of the chief means of educating or perfecting talent and genius. One of the great laws of our nature, and a law singularly important to social beings, is, that the intellect enlarges and strengthens itself by expressing worthily its best views. In this, as in other respects, it is more blessed to give than to receive

Superior minds are formed, not merely by solitary thought, but almost as much by communication. Great thoughts are never fully possessed, till he who has conceived them has given them fit utterance. One of the noblest and most invigorating labors of genius is, to clothe its conceptions in clear and glorious forms, to give them existence in other souls. Thus literature creates, as well as manifests, intellectual power, and, without it, the highest minds will never be summoned to the most invigorating action.

We doubt whether a man ever brings his faculties to bear with their whole force on a subject, until he writes upon it for the instruction or gratification of others. To place it clearly before others, he feels the necessity of viewing it more vividly himself. By attempting to seize his thoughts, and fix them in an enduring form, he finds them vague and unsatisfactory, to a degree which he did not suspect, and toils for a precision and harmony of views, of which he never before felt the need. He places his subject in new lights; submits it to a searching analysis; compares and connects with it his various knowledge; seeks for it new illustrations and analogies; weighs objections; and, through these processes, often arrives at higher truths than he at first aimed to illustrate. Dim conceptions grow bright. Glorious thoughts, which had darted as meteors through the mind, are arrested, and gradually shine with a sun-like splendor, with prolific energy, on the intellect and heart. It is one of the chief distinctions of a great mind, that it is prone to rush into twilight regions, and to catch faint glimmerings of distant and unbounded prospects; and nothing perhaps aids it more to pierce the shadows which surround it, than the labor to un-

fold to other minds the indistinct conceptions which have dawned on its own. Even where composition yields no such fruits, it is still a great intellectual help. It always favors comprehensive and systematical views. The laborious distribution of a great subject, so as to assign to each part or topic its just position and due proportion, is singularly fitted to give compass and persevering force of thought.

If we confine ourselves simply to the consideration of style, we shall have reason to think that a people among whom this is neglected, wants one important intellectual aid. In this, great power is exerted, and by exertion increased. To the multitude, indeed, language seems so natural an instrument, that to use it with clearness and energy seems no great effort. It is framed, they think, to the writer's hand, and so continually employed as to need little thought or skill. But in nothing is the creative power of a gifted writer seen more than in his style. True, his words may be found in the dictionary. But there they lie disjointed and dead. What a wonderful life does he breathe into them by compacting them into his sentences! Perhaps he uses no term which has not been hackneyed by ordinary writers; and yet with these vulgar materials what miracles does he achieve! What a world of thought does he condense into a phrase! By new combinations of common words, what delicate hues or what a blaze of light does he pour over his subject! Power of style depends very little on the structure or copiousness of the language which the writer of genius employs, but chiefly, if not wholly, on his own mind. The words, arranged in his dictionary, are no more fitted to depict his thoughts, than the block of marble in the sculptor's shop, to

show forth the conceptions which are dawning in his mind. Both are inert materials. The power, which pervades them, comes from the soul; and the same creative energy is manifested in the production of a noble style, as in extracting beautiful forms from lifeless stone. How unfaithful, then, is a nation to its own intellect, in which grace and force of style receive no culture.

The remarks now made on the importance of literature as a means of educating talent and genius, we are aware, do not apply equally to all subjects or kinds of knowledge. In the exact or physical sciences, a man may acquire much without composition, and may make discoveries without registering them. Even here, however, we believe, that, by a systematic developement of his views in a luminous style, he will bring great aid to his own faculties, as well as to others'. It is on the vast subjects of morals and human nature, that the mind especially strengthens itself by elaborate composition; and these, let it be remembered, form the staple of the highest literature. Moral truth, under which we include every thing relating to mind and character, is of a refined and subtile, as well as elevated nature, and requires the joint and full exercise of discrimination, invention, imagination, and sensibility, to give it effectual utterance. A writer, who would make it visible and powerful, must strive to join an austere logic to a fervent eloquence; must place it in various lights; must create for it interesting forms; must wed it to beauty; must illuminate it by similitudes and contrasts; must show its correspondence with the outward world; perhaps must frame for it a vast machinery of fiction. How invigorating are these efforts! Yet it is only in writing, in elaborate composition, that they are deliberately called

forth and sustained, and without literature they would almost cease. It may be said of many truths, that greater intellectual energy is required to express them with effect, than to conceive them; so that a nation, which does not encourage this expression, impoverishes so far its own mind. Take, for example, Shakspeare's Hamlet. This is a developement of a singularly interesting view of human nature. It shows us a mind, to which life is a burden; in which the powers of meditation and feeling are disproportioned to the active powers; which sinks under its own weight, under the consciousness of wanting energies commensurate with its visions of good, with its sore trials, and with the solemn task which is laid upon it. To conceive clearly this form of human nature, shows indeed the genius of the writer. But what a new power is required to bring it out in such a drama as Shakspeare's; to give it life and action; to invent for it circumstances and subordinate characters, fitted to call it forth; to give it tones of truth and nature; to show the hues which it casts over all the objects of thought! This intellectual energy we all perceive; and this was not merely *manifested* in Shakspeare's work, but, without such a work, it would not have been awakened. His invention would have slumbered, had he not desired to give forth his mind, in a visible and enduring form. Thus literature is the nurse of genius. Through this, genius learns its own strength, and continually accumulates it; and of course, in a country without literature, genius, however liberally bestowed by the Creator, will languish, and will fail to fulfil its great duty of quickening the mass amidst which it lives.

We come now to our last, and what we deem a

weighty argument in favor of a native literature. We desire and would cherish it, because we hope from it important aids to the cause of truth and human nature. We believe, that a literature, springing up in this new soil, would bear new fruits, and, in some respects, more precious fruits, than are elsewhere produced. We know that our hopes may be set down to the account of that national vanity, which, with too much reason, is placed by foreigners among our besetting sins. But we speak from calm and deliberate conviction. We are inclined to believe, that, as a people, we occupy a position, from which the great subjects of literature may be viewed more justly than from those which most other nations hold. Undoubtedly we labor under disadvantages. We want the literary apparatus of Europe; her libraries, her universities, her learned institutions, her race of professed scholars, her spots consecrated by the memory of sages, and a thousand stirring associations which hover over ancient nurseries of learning. But the mind is not a local power. Its spring is within itself, and, under the inspiration of liberal and high feeling, it may attain and worthily express nobler truth than outward helps could reveal.

The great distinction of our country is, that we enjoy some peculiar advantages for understanding our own nature. Man is the great subject of literature, and juster and profounder views of man may be expected here, than elsewhere. In Europe, political and artificial distinctions have, more or less, triumphed over and obscured our common nature. In Europe, we meet kings, nobles, priests, peasants. How much rarer is it to meet *men*; by which we mean, human beings conscious of their own nature, and conscious of the utter worthless-

ness of all outward distinctions, compared with what is treasured up in their own souls. Man does not value himself as man. It is for his blood, his rank, or some artificial distinction, and not for the attributes of humanity, that he holds himself in respect. The institutions of the old world all tend to throw obscurity over what we most need to know, and that is, the worth and claims of a human being. We know that great improvements in this respect are going on abroad. Still the many are too often postponed to the few. The mass of men are regarded as instruments to work with, as materials to be shaped for the use of their superiors. That consciousness of our own nature, which contains, as a germ, all nobler thoughts, which teaches us at once self-respect and respect for others, and which binds us to God by filial sentiment and hope, this has been repressed, kept down by establishments founded in force; and literature, in all its departments, bears, we think, the traces of this inward degradation. We conceive that our position favors a juster and profounder estimate of human nature. We mean not to boast, but there are fewer obstructions to that moral consciousness, that consciousness of humanity, of which we have spoken. Man is not hidden from us by so many disguises as in the old world. The essential equality of all human beings, founded on the possession of a spiritual, progressive, immortal nature, is, we hope, better understood; and nothing more than this single conviction is needed, to work the mightiest changes in every province of human life and of human thought.

We have stated what seems to us our most important distinction. But our position has other advantages. The mere circumstance of its being a new one, gives reason

to hope for some new intellectual activity, some fresher views of nature and life. We are not borne down by the weight of antiquated institutions, time-hallowed abuses, and the remnants of feudal barbarism. The absence of a religious establishment is an immense gain, as far as originality of mind is in question; for an establishment, however advantageous in other respects, is, by its nature, hostile to discovery and progress. To keep the mind where it is, to fasten the notions of one age on all future time, is its aim and proper business; and if it happened, as has generally been the case, to grow up in an age of strife and passion, when, as history demonstrates, the church was overrun with error, it cannot but perpetuate darkness and mental bondage. Among us, intellect, though far from being free, has broken some of the chains of other countries, and is more likely, we conceive, to propose to itself its legitimate object, truth, — everlasting and universal truth.

We have no thought of speaking contemptuously of the literature of the old world. It is our daily nutriment. We feel our debt to be immense to the glorious company of pure and wise minds, which in foreign lands have bequeathed us in writing their choicest thoughts and holiest feelings. Still we feel, that all existing literature has been produced under influences, which have necessarily mixed with it much error and corruption; and that the whole of it ought to pass, and must pass, under rigorous review. For example, we think that the history of the human race is to be re-written. Men imbued with the prejudices which thrive under aristocracies and state religions, cannot understand it. Past ages, with their great events, and great men, are to undergo, we think, a new trial, and to yield new results. It is

plain, that history is already viewed under new aspects, and we believe, that the true principles for studying and writing it are to be unfolded here, at least as rapidly as in other countries. It seems to us that in literature an immense work is yet to be done. The most interesting questions to mankind are yet in debate. Great principles are yet to be settled in criticism, in morals, in politics; and, above all, the true character of religion is to be rescued from the disguises and corruptions of ages. We want a reformation. We want a literature, in which genius will pay supreme, if not undivided homage, to truth and virtue; in which the childish admiration of what has been called greatness, will give place to a wise moral judgment; which will breathe reverence for the mind, and elevating thoughts of God. The part which this country is to bear in this great intellectual reform, we presume not to predict. We feel, however, that, if true to itself, it will have the glory and happiness of giving new impulses to the human mind. This is our cherished hope. We should have no heart to encourage native literature, did we not hope that it would become instinct with a new spirit. We cannot admit the thought, that this country is to be only a repetition of the old world. We delight to believe that God, in the fulness of time, has brought a new continent to light, in order that the human mind should move here with a new freedom, should frame new social institutions, should explore new paths, and reap new harvests. We are accustomed to estimate nations by their creative energies, and we shall blush for our country, if, in circumstances so peculiar, original, and creative, it shall satisfy itself with a passive reception and mechanical reiteration of the thoughts of strangers.

We have now completed our remarks on the importance of a native literature. The next great topic is, the means of producing it; and here our limits forbid us to enlarge; yet we cannot pass it over in silence. A primary and essential means of the improvement of our literature, is, that, as a people, we should feel its value, should desire it, should demand it, should encourage it, and should give it a hearty welcome. It will come if called for; and, under this conviction, we have now labored to create a want for it in the community. We say, that we must call for it; by which we mean, not merely that we must invite it by good wishes and kind words, but must make liberal provision for intellectual education. We must enlarge our literary institutions, secure more extensive and profound teaching, and furnish helps and resources to men of superior talent for continued, laborious research. As yet, intellectual labor, devoted to a thorough investigation and a full developement of great subjects, is almost unknown among us; and, without it, we shall certainly rear few lasting monuments of thought. We boast of our primary schools. We want universities worthy of the name, where a man of genius and literary zeal may possess himself of all that is yet known, and may strengthen himself by intercourse with kindred minds. We know it will be said, that we cannot afford these. But it is not so. We are rich enough for ostentation, for intemperance, for luxury. We can lavish millions on fashion, on furniture, on dress, on our palaces, on our pleasures; but we have nothing to spend for the mind. Where lies our poverty? In the purse, or in the soul?

We have spoken of improved institutions as essential to an improved literature. We beg, however, not to be

misunderstood, as if these were invested with a creating power, or would necessarily yield the results which we desire. They are the means, not causes, of advancement. Literature depends on individual genius, and this, though fostered, cannot be created by outward helps. No human mechanism can produce original thought. After all the attempts to explain by education the varieties of intellect, we are compelled to believe that minds, like all the other products of nature, have original and indestructible differences; that they are not exempted from that great and beautiful law, which joins with strong resemblances as strong diversities; and, of consequence, we believe, that the men who are to be the lights of the world, bring with them their commission and power from God. Still, whilst institutions cannot create, they may and do unfold genius; and, for want of them, great minds often slumber or run to waste, whilst a still larger class, who want genius, but possess admirable powers, fail of that culture, through which they might enjoy and approach their more gifted brethren.

A people, as we have said, are to give aid to literature, by founding wise and enlarged institutions. They may do much more. They may exert a nobler patronage. By cherishing in their own breasts the love of truth, virtue, and freedom, they may do much to nurse and kindle genius in its favored possessors. There is a constant reaction between a community and the great minds which spring up within it, and they form one another. In truth, great minds are developed more by the spirit and character of the people to which they belong, than by all other causes. Thus, a free spirit, a thirst for new and higher knowledge in a community,

does infinitely more for literature, than the most splendid benefactions under despotism. A nation under any powerful excitement, becomes fruitful of talent. Among a people called to discuss great questions, to contend for great interests, to make great sacrifices for the public weal, we always find new and unsuspected energies of thought brought out. A mercenary, selfish, luxurious, sensual people, toiling only to secure the pleasures of sloth, will often communicate their own softness and baseness to the superior minds which dwell among them. In this impure atmosphere, the celestial spark burns dim, and well will it be, if God's great gift of genius be not impiously prostituted to lust and crime.

In conformity with the views now stated, we believe that literature is to be carried forward, here and elsewhere, chiefly by some new and powerful impulses communicated to society; and it is a question naturally suggested by this discussion, from what impulse, principle, excitement, the highest action of the mind may now be expected. When we look back, we see that literature has been originated and modified by a variety of principles; by patriotism and national feeling, by reverence for antiquity, by the spirit of innovation, by enthusiasm, by skepticism, by the passion for fame, by romantic love, and by political and religious convulsions. Now we do not expect from these causes any higher action of the mind, than they have yet produced. Perhaps most of them have spent their force. The very improvements of society seem to forbid the manifestation of their former energy. For example, the patriotism of antiquity and the sexual love of chivalrous ages, which inspired so much of the old literature, are now seen to be feverish and vicious excesses of natural principles, and have gone, we trust, never to return.

Are we asked, then, to what impulse or power, we look for a higher literature than has yet existed? We answer, to a new action or developement of the religious principle. This remark will probably surprise not a few of our readers. It seems to us, that the energy with which this principle is to act on the intellect, is hardly suspected. Men identify religion with superstition, with fanaticism, with the common forms of Christianity; and seeing it arrayed against intellect, leagued with oppression, fettering inquiry, and incapable of being blended with the sacred dictates of reason and conscience, they see in its progress only new encroachments on free and enlightened thinking. Still, man's relation to God is the great quickening truth, throwing all other truths into insignificance, and a truth which, however obscured and paralyzed by the many errors which ignorance and fraud have hitherto linked with it, has ever been a chief spring of human improvement. We look to it as the true life of the intellect. No man can be just to himself, can comprehend his own existence, can put forth all his powers with an heroic confidence, can deserve to be the guide and inspirer of other minds, till he has risen to communion with the Supreme Mind; till he feels his filial connexion with the Universal Parent; till he regards himself as the recipient and minister of the Infinite Spirit; till he feels his consecration to the ends which religion unfolds; till he rises above human opinion, and is moved by a higher impulse than fame.

From these remarks it will be seen, that our chief hopes of an improved literature rest on our hopes of an improved religion. From the prevalent theology, which has come down to us from the dark ages, we hope

nothing. It has done its best. All that can grow up under its sad shade has already been brought forth. It wraps the Divine nature and human nature in impenetrable gloom. It overlays Christianity with technical, arbitrary dogmas. True faith is of another lineage. It comes from the same source with reason, conscience, and our best affections, and is in harmony with them all. True faith is essentially a moral conviction; a confidence in the reality and immutableness of moral distinctions; a confidence in disinterested virtue or in spiritual excellence as the supreme good; a confidence in God as its fountain and almighty friend, and in Jesus Christ as having lived and died to breathe it into the soul; a confidence in its power, triumphs, and immortality; a confidence, through which outward changes, obstructions, disasters, sufferings, are overcome, or rather made instruments of perfection. Such a faith, unfolded freely and powerfully, must "work mightily" on the intellect as well as on practice. By revealing to us the supreme purpose of the Creator, it places us, as it were, in the centre of the universe, from which the harmonies, true relations, and brightest aspects of things are discerned. It unites calmness and enthusiasm, and the concord of these seemingly hostile elements is essential to the full and healthy action of the creative powers of the soul. It opens the eye to beauty and the heart to love. Literature, under this influence, will become more ingenuous and single-hearted; will penetrate farther into the soul; will find new interpretations of nature and life; will breathe a martyr's love of truth, tempered with a never-failing charity; and, whilst sympathizing with all human suffering, will still be pervaded by a healthful cheerfulness, and will often break forth

in tones of irrepressible joy, responsive to that happiness which fills God's universe.

We cannot close our remarks on the means of an improved literature, without offering one suggestion. We earnestly recommend to our educated men a more extensive acquaintance with the intellectual labors of continental Europe. Our reading is confined too much to English books, and especially to the more recent publications of Great Britain. In this we err. We ought to know the different modes of viewing and discussing great subjects in different nations. We should be able to compare the writings of the highest minds in a great variety of circumstances. Nothing can favor more our own intellectual independence and activity. Let English literature be ever so fruitful and profound, we should still impoverish ourselves by making it our sole nutriment. We fear, however, that at the present moment English books want much which we need. The intellect of that nation is turned now to what are called practical and useful subjects. Physical science goes forward, and what is very encouraging, it is spread with unexampled zeal through all classes of the community. Abuses of government, of the police, of the penal code, of charity, of poor laws, and corn laws, are laboriously explored. General education is improved. Science is applied to the arts with brilliant success. We see much good in progress. But we find little profound or fervid thinking, expressed in the higher forms of literature. The noblest subjects of the intellect receive little attention. We see an almost total indifference to intellectual and moral science. In England there is a great want of philosophy, in the true sense of that word. If we examine her reviews, in which much

of the intellectual power of the nation is expended, we meet perpetually a jargon of criticism, which shows a singular want of great and general principles in estimating works of art. We have no ethical work of any living English writer to be compared with that of Degerando, entitled, "*Du Perfectionnement Moral;*" and, although we have little respect for the rash generalizations of the bold and eloquent Cousin, yet the interest which his metaphysics awaken in Paris, is in our estimation a better presage than the lethargy which prevails on such topics in England. In these remarks we have no desire to depreciate the literature of England, which, taken as a whole, we regard as the noblest monument of the human mind. We rejoice in our descent from England, and esteem our free access to her works of science and genius, as among our high privileges. Nor do we feel as if her strength were spent. We see no wrinkles on her brow, no decrepitude in her step. At this moment she has authors, especially in poetry and fiction, whose names are "familiar in our mouths as household words," and who can never perish but with her language. Still we think, that at present her intellect is laboring more for herself than for mankind, and that our scholars, if they would improve our literature, should cultivate an intimacy not only with that of England, but of continental Europe.

We have now finished our remarks on the importance and means of an improved literature among ourselves. Are we asked what we hope in this particular? We answer, much. We see reasons for anticipating an increased and more efficient direction of talent to this object. But on these we cannot enlarge. There is, however, one ground of expectation, to which we will

call a moment's attention. We apprehend that literature is to make progress through an important change in society, which civilization and good institutions are making more and more apparent. It seems to us, that, through these causes, political life is less and less regarded as the only or chief sphere for superior minds, and that influence and honor are more and more accumulated in the hands of literary and thinking men. Of consequence, more and more of the intellect of communities is to be drawn to literature. The distinction between antiquity and the present times, in respect to the importance attached to political life, seems to us striking; and it is not an accidental difference, but founded on permanent causes which are to operate with increased power. In ancient times, every thing, abroad and at home, threw men upon the public, and generated an intense thirst for political power. On the contrary, the improvement of later periods inclines men to give importance to literature. For example, the instability of the ancient republics, the unsettled relations of different classes of society, the power of demagogues and orators, the intensity of factions, the want of moral and religious restraints, the want of some regular organ for expressing the public mind, the want of precedents and precise laws for the courts of justice, these and other circumstances gave to the ancient citizen a feeling as if revolutions and convulsions were inseparable from society, turned his mind with unremitting anxiety to public affairs, and made a participation of political power an important, if not an essential, means of personal safety. — Again, the ancient citizen had no home, in our sense of the word. He lived in the market, the forum, the place of general resort, and of course his attention was

very much engrossed by affairs of state. — Again, religion, which now more than all things throws a man upon himself, was in ancient times a public concern, and turned men to political life. The religion of the heart and closet was unknown. The relation of the gods to particular states, was their most prominent attribute; and to conciliate their favor to the community, the chief end of worship. Accordingly, religion consisted chiefly in public and national rites. In Rome, the highest men in the state presided at the altar, and, adding to their other titles that of Supreme Pontiff, performed the most solemn functions of the priesthood. Thus the whole strength of the religious principle was turned into political channels. The gods were thought to sustain no higher office than a political one, and of consequence this was esteemed the most glorious for men. — Once more, in ancient times political rank was vastly more efficient, whether for good or for evil, than at present, and of consequence was the object of a more insatiable ambition. It was almost the only way of access to the multitude. The public man held a sway over opinion, over his country, perhaps over foreign states, now unknown. It is the influence of the press and of good institutions to reduce the importance of the man of office. In proportion as private individuals can act on the public mind; in proportion as a people read, think, and have the means of expressing and enforcing their opinions; in proportion as laws become fixed, known, and sanctioned by the moral sense of the community; in proportion as the interests of the state, the principles of administration, and all public measures, are subjected to free and familiar discussion, government becomes a secondary influence. The power passes into

the hands of those who think, write, and spread their minds far and wide. Accordingly, literature is to become more and more the instrument of swaying men, of doing good, of achieving fame. The contrast between ancient and modern times, in the particulars now stated, is too obvious to need illustration, and our great inference is equally clear. The vast improvements, which, in the course of ages, have taken place in social order, in domestic life, in religion, in knowledge, all conspire to one result, all tend to introduce other and higher influences than political power, and to give to that form of intellectual effort, which we call literature, dominion over human affairs. Thus truth, we apprehend, is more and more felt; and from its influence, joined with our peculiar condition and free institutions, we hope for our country the happiness and glory of a pure, deep, rich, beautiful, and ennobling literature.

# REMARKS

ON

# ASSOCIATIONS.

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1. Fourth Annual Report to the American Unitarian Association, read and accepted May 26, 1829, with the Addresses at the Annual Meeting.
2. The Second Annual Report of the Executive Committee of the American Society for the Promotion of Temperance, presented January 28, 1829.
3. First Annual Report of the General Union for Promoting the Observance of the Christian Sabbath, adopted May 12, 1829.

We have affixed to this article the titles of several reports of societies, not so much for the purpose of discussing the merits of the several institutions whose labors they celebrate, as with the more general design of offering some remarks on the disposition which now prevails to form associations, and to accomplish all objects by organized masses. A difference of opinion on this point has begun to manifest itself, and murmurs against the countless societies which modestly solicit or authoritatively claim our aid, which now assail us with fair promises of the good which they purpose, and now with rhetorical encomiums on the good they have

done, begin to break forth from the judicious and well disposed, as well as from the querulous and selfish. These doubts and complaints, however, are most frequently excited by particular cases of unfair or injurious operations in societies. As yet no general principles have been established, by which the value of this mode of action may be determined, or the relative claims of different associations may be weighed. We will not promise to supply the deficiency, but we hope to furnish some help to a sounder judgment than yet prevails on the subject.

That the subject deserves attention, no man who observes the signs of the times can doubt. Its importance forces itself on the reflecting. In truth, one of the most remarkable circumstances or features of our age, is the energy with which the principle of combination, or of action by joint forces, by associated numbers, is manifesting itself. It may be said, without much exaggeration, that every thing is done now by societies. Men have learned what wonders can be accomplished in certain cases by union, and seem to think that union is competent to every thing. You can scarcely name an object for which some institution has not been formed. Would men spread one set of opinions, or crush another? They make a society. Would they improve the penal code, or relieve poor debtors? They make societies. Would they encourage agriculture, or manufactures, or science? They make societies. Would one class encourage horse-racing, and another discourage travelling on Sunday? They form societies. We have immense institutions spreading over the country, combining hosts for particular objects. We have minute ramifications of these societies, penetrating everywhere

except through the poor-house, and conveying resources from the domestic, the laborer, and even the child, to the central treasury. This principle of association is worthy the attention of the philosopher, who simply aims to understand society, and its most powerful springs. To the philanthropist and the Christian it is exceedingly interesting, for it is a mighty engine, and must act either for good or for evil, to an extent which no man can foresee or comprehend.

It is very easy, we conceive, to explain this great developement of the principle of coöperation. The main cause is, the immense facility given to intercourse by modern improvements, by increased commerce and travelling, by the post-office, by the steam-boat, and especially by the press, — by newspapers, periodicals, tracts, and other publications. Through these means, men of one mind, through a whole country, easily understand one another, and easily act together. The grand manœuvre to which Napoleon owed his victories, we mean the concentration of great numbers on a single point, is now placed within the reach of all parties and sects. It may be said, that, by facilities of intercourse, men are brought within one another's attraction, and become arranged according to their respective affinities. Those who have one great object, find one another out through a vast extent of country, join their forces, settle their mode of operation, and act together with the uniformity of a disciplined army. So extensive have coalitions become, through the facilities now described, and so various and rapid are the means of communication, that, when a few leaders have agreed on an object, an impulse may be given in a month to the whole country, whole states may be deluged with tracts and other pub-

lications, and a voice like that of many waters, be called forth from immense and widely separated multitudes. Here is a new power brought to bear on society, and it is a great moral question, how it ought to be viewed, and what duties it imposes.

That this mode of action has advantages and recommendations, is very obvious. The principal arguments in its favor may be stated in a few words. Men, it is justly said, can do jointly, what they cannot do singly. The union of minds and hands works wonders. Men grow efficient by concentrating their powers. Joint effort conquers nature, hews through mountains, rears pyramids, dikes out the ocean. Man, left to himself, living without a fellow, if he could indeed so live, would be one of the weakest of creatures. Associated with his kind, he gains dominion over the strongest animals, over the earth and the sea, and, by his growing knowledge, may be said to obtain a kind of property in the universe.

Nor is this all. Men not only accumulate power by union, but gain warmth and earnestness. The heart is kindled. An electric communication is established between those who are brought nigh, and bound to each other, in common labors. Man droops in solitude. No sound excites him like the voice of his fellow-creature. The mere sight of a human countenance, brightened with strong and generous emotion, gives new strength to act or suffer. Union not only brings to a point forces which before existed, and which were ineffectual through separation, but, by the feeling and interest which it rouses, it becomes a creative principle, calls forth new forces, and gives the mind a consciousness of powers, which would otherwise have been unknown.

We have here given the common arguments by which the disposition to association is justified and recommended. They may be summed up in a few words; namely, that our social principles and relations are the great springs of improvement, and of vigorous and efficient exertion. That there is much truth in this representation of the influences of society, we at once feel. That, without impulses and excitements from abroad, without sympathies and communication with our fellow-creatures, we should gain nothing and accomplish nothing, we mean not to deny. Still we apprehend, that on this subject there is a want of accurate views and just discrimination. We apprehend that the true use of society is not sufficiently understood; that the chief benefit which it is intended to confer, and the chief danger to which it exposes us, are seldom weighed, and that errors or crude opinions on these points deprive us of many benefits of our social connexions. These topics have an obvious bearing on the subject of this article. It is plain that the better we understand the true use, the chief benefit, and the chief peril of our social principles and relations, the better we shall be prepared to judge of associations which are offered to our patronage. On these topics, then, we propose first to give our views; and in so doing, we shall allow ourselves a considerable latitude, because, in our judgment, the influences of society at present tend strongly to excess, and especially menace that individuality of character, for which they can yield no adequate compensation.

The great principle, from which we start in this preliminary discussion, and in which all our views of the topics above proposed are involved, may be briefly expressed. It is this;— Society is chiefly important, as

it ministers to, and calls forth, intellectual and moral energy and freedom. Its action on the individual is beneficial, in proportion as it awakens in him a power to act on himself, and to control or withstand the social influences to which he is at first subjected. Society serves us, by furnishing objects, occasions, materials, excitements, through which the whole soul may be brought into vigorous exercise, may acquire a consciousness of its free and responsible nature, may become a law to itself, and may rise to the happiness and dignity of framing and improving itself without limit or end. Inward, creative energy, is the highest good which accrues to us from our social principles and connexions. The mind is enriched, not by what it passively receives from others, but by its own action on what it receives. We would especially affirm of virtue, that it does not consist in what we inherit, or what comes to us from abroad. It is of inward growth, and it grows by nothing so much as by resistance of foreign influences, by acting from our deliberate convictions, in opposition to the principles of sympathy and imitation. According to these views, our social nature and connexions are means. Inward power is the end; a power which is to triumph over, and control, the influence of society.

We are told, that we owe to society our most valuable knowledge. And true it is, that, were we cast from birth into solitude, we should grow up in brutal ignorance. But it is also true, that the knowledge which we receive is of little value, any farther than it is food nd excitement to intellectual action. Its worth is to e measured by the energy with which it is sought and nployed. Knowledge is noble, in proportion as it is olific; in proportion as it quickens the mind to the

acquisition of higher truth. Let it be rested in passively, and it profits us nothing. Let the judgment of others be our trust, so that we cease to judge for ourselves, and the intellect is degraded into a worthless machine. The dignity of the mind is to be estimated by the energy of its efforts for its own enlargement. It becomes heroic, when it reverences itself and asserts its freedom in a cowardly and servile age; when it withstands society through a calm, but invincible love of truth, and a consciousness of the dignity and progressiveness of its powers.

The indispensable necessity of instruction from our fellow-creatures, we in no degree question. But perhaps few are aware how imperfect are the conceptions received from the best instructor, and how much must be done by our own solitary thinking, to give them consistency and vividness. It may be doubted whether a fellow-creature can ever impart to us apprehensions of a complex subject, which are altogether just. Be the teacher ever so unerring, his language can hardly communicate his mind with entire precision; for few words awaken exactly the same thoughts in different men. The views which we receive from the most gifted beings, are at best an approximation to truth. We have spoken of unerring teachers; but where are these to be found? Our daily intercourse is with fallible beings, most of whom are undisciplined in intellect, the slaves of prejudice, and unconscious of their own spiritual energies. The essential condition of intellectual progress in such a world, is the resistance of social influences, or of impressions from our fellow-beings.

What we have said of intellectual, is still more true of moral progress. No human being exists, whose char-

acter can be proposed as a faultless model. But, could a perfect individual be found, we should only injure ourselves by indiscriminate, servile imitation; for much which is good in another, is good in him alone, belongs to his peculiar constitution, has been the growth of his peculiar experience, is harmonious and beautiful only in combination with his other attributes, and would be unnatural, awkward, and forced in a servile imitator. The very strength of emotion, which in one man is virtue, in another would be defect; for virtue depends on the balance which exists between the various principles of the soul; and that intenseness of feeling, which, when joined with force of thought and purpose, is healthful and invigorating, would prove a disease, or might approach insanity, in a weak and sensitive mind. No man should part with his individuality, and aim to become another. No process is so fatal as that which would cast all men into one mould. Every human being is intended to have a character of his own, to be what no other is, to do what no other can do. Our common nature is to be unfolded in unbounded diversities. It is rich enough for infinite manifestations. It is to wear innumerable forms of beauty and glory. Every human being has a work to carry on within, duties to perform abroad, influences to exert, which are peculiarly his, and which no conscience but his own can teach. Let him not, then, enslave his conscience to others, but act with the freedom, strength, and dignity of one, whose highest law is in his own breast.

We know that it may be replied to us, that Providence, by placing us at birth in entire subjection to social influences, has marked out society as the great instrument of determining the human mind. The child, it

is said, is plainly designed to receive passively and with unresisting simplicity, a host of impressions, thoughts, and feelings, from those around him. This we know. But we know, too, that childhood is not to endure for ever. We know that the impressions, pleasures, pains, which throng and possess the infant mind, are intended to awaken in it an energy, by which it is to subject them to itself; by which it is to separate from the crude mass what is true and pure; by which it is to act upon, and modify, and throw into new combinations, the materials forced upon it originally by sensation and society. It is only by putting forth this inward and self-forming power, that we emerge from childhood. He who continues to be passively moulded, prolongs his infancy to the tomb. There is deep wisdom in the declaration of Jesus, that to be his disciple, we must "hate father and mother"; or, in other words, that we must surrender the prejudices of education to the new lights which God gives us; that the love of truth must triumph over the influences of our best and earliest friends; that, forsaking the maxims of society, we must frame ourselves according to the standard of moral perfection set before us in the life, spirit, and teachings of Jesus Christ. It is interesting to observe how the Creator, who has subjected the child at first to social influences, has, even at that age, provided for its growing freedom, by inspiring it with an overflowing animation, an inexpressible joy, an impatience of limits, a thirst for novelty, a delight in adventure, an ardent fancy, all suited to balance the authority of the old, and gradually mingling with the credulity of infancy that questioning, doubting spirit, on which intellectual progress chiefly depends.

The common opinion is, that our danger from society

arises wholly from its bad members, and that we cannot easily be too much influenced by the good. But, to our apprehension, there is a peril in the influence both of good and bad. What many of us have chiefly to dread from society, is, not that we shall acquire a positive character of vice, but that it will impose on us a negative character, that we shall live and die passive beings, that the creative and self-forming energy of the soul will not be called forth in the work of our improvement. Our danger is, that we shall substitute the consciences of others for our own, that we shall paralyze our faculties through dependence on foreign guides, that we shall be moulded from abroad instead of determining ourselves. The pressure of society upon us is constant, and almost immeasurable; now open and direct in the form of authority and menace, now subtile and silent in the guise of blandishment and promise. What mighty power is lodged in a frown or a smile, in the voice of praise and flattery, in scorn or neglect, in public opinion, in domestic habits and prejudices, in the state and spirit of the community to which we belong! Nothing escapes the cognizance of society. Its legislation extends even to our dress, movements, features; and the individual bears the traces, even in countenance, air, and voice, of the social influences amidst which he has been plunged. We are in great peril of growing up slaves to this exacting, arbitrary sovereign; of forgetting, or never learning, our true responsibility; of living in unconsciousness of that divine power with which we are invested over ourselves, and in which all the dignity of our nature is concentred; of overlooking the sacredness of our minds, and laying them open to impressions from any and all who surround us. Resistance of this

foreign pressure is our only safeguard, and is essential to virtue. All virtue lies in individual action, in inward energy, in self-determination. There is no moral worth in being swept away by a crowd, even towards the best objects. We must act from an inward spring. The good, as well as the bad, may injure us, if, through that intolerance which is a common infirmity of the good, they impose on us authoritatively their own convictions, and obstruct our own intellectual and moral activity. A state of society, in which correct habits prevail, may produce in many, a mechanical regularity and religion, which is any thing but virtue. Nothing morally great or good springs from mere sympathy and imitation. These principles will only forge chains for us, and perpetuate our infancy, unless more and more controlled and subdued by that inward lawgiver and judge, whose authority is from God, and whose sway over our whole nature, alone secures its free, glorious, and everlasting expansion.

The truth is, and we need to feel it most deeply, that our connexion with society, as it is our greatest aid, so it is our greatest peril. We are in constant danger of being spoiled of our moral judgment, and of our power over ourselves; and, in losing these, we lose the chief prerogatives of spiritual beings. We sink, as far as mind can sink, into the world of matter, the chief distinction of which is, that it wants self-motion, or moves only from foreign impulse. The propensity in our fellow-creatures, which we have most to dread, is that, which, though most severely condemned by Jesus, is yet the most frequent infirmity of his followers; we mean, the propensity to rule, to tyrannize, to war with the freedom of their equals, to make themselves stand-

ards for other minds, to be lawgivers, instead of brethren and friends, to their race. Our great and most difficult duty, as social beings, is, to derive constant aid from society without taking its yoke; to open our minds to the thoughts, reasonings, and persuasions of others, and yet to hold fast the sacred right of private judgment; to receive impulses from our fellow-beings, and yet to act from our own souls; to sympathize with others, and yet to determine our own feelings; to act with others, and yet to follow our own consciences; to unite social deference and self-dominion; to join moral self-subsistence with social dependence; to respect others without losing self-respect; to love our friends, and to reverence our superiors, whilst our supreme homage is given to that moral perfection which no friend and no superior has realized, and which, if faithfully pursued, will often demand separation from all around us. Such is our great work as social beings, and, to perform it, we should look habitually to Jesus Christ, who was distinguished by nothing more than by moral independence, than by resisting and overcoming the world.

The reverence for our own moral nature, on which we have now insisted, needs earnest and perpetual inculcation. This virtue finds few aids from abroad. All religions and governments have more or less warred with it. Even that religion, which came from God to raise man to a moral empire over himself, has been seized on by the selfish and intolerant principles of human nature, and all its sanctions have been brought to bear against that free, independent action of thought and conscience, which it was chiefly intended to promote. In truth, men need to be instructed in nothing more

than in what they owe to their own spiritual faculties. The sacredness of the moral principle in every human breast; its divine right of dominion; the jealousy with which it ought to be protected against our own passions, and the usurpations of society; the watchful care with which it should be unfolded, refined, and fortified, by communion with ourselves, with great and good minds, with that brightest manifestation of God, Jesus Christ, and with God himself; the awe with which its deliberate dictates should be heard; the energy which it may and should put forth in opposition to pleasure and pain, to human frowns or smiles; the sublime tranquillity to which it may ascend; the conscious union with God which it may attain, and through which it seems to partake of his omnipotence; these prerogatives of the moral nature, of that element and spark of Divinity in the soul, are almost forgotten in the condition of servitude to which the multitude are reduced by the joint tyranny of the passions and of society.

It is interesting and encouraging to observe, that the enslaving power of society over the mind is decreasing, through what would seem at first to threaten its enlargement; we mean, through the extension of social intercourse. This is a distinction of our age, and one of its chief means of improvement. Men are widening their bounds, exchanging thoughts and feelings with fellow-beings far and wide, with inhabitants of other countries, with subjects of other governments, with professors of other modes of faith. Distant nations are brought near, and are acting on one another with a new power; and the result is, that these differing and often hostile influences balance or neutralize one another, and almost compel the intellect to act, to compare, to judge, to

frame itself. This we deem an immense benefit of the multiplication of books at the present day. The best books contain errors, and deserve a very limited trust. But, wherever men of thought and genius publish freely, they will perpetually send forth new views, to keep alive the intellectual action of the world; will give a frequent shock to received opinions; will lead men to contemplate great subjects from new positions, and, by thus awakening individual and independent energy, will work higher good than by the knowledge which they spread. The same effect is to be anticipated from the study of different languages, which occupies more and more space in our systems of education; and we believe this to be the happiest effect. A great man used to say, that, in learning a new language, he had gained a new soul, so fresh and original were the views which it opened to him. A new language, considered in itself, or without reference to the writings which it contains, seems to us a valuable possession, on account of the new combinations of thought which its vocabulary presents; and when regarded as the key to the minds of a people, whose institutions, education, climate, temperament, religion, and history differ from our own, and in whom, of consequence, our common nature is taking a new form, it is, to one who has power to understand its use, an invaluable acquisition. In truth, we cannot express too strongly the importance we attach to an enlarged intercourse with other minds, considered as the means of freeing and quickening our own. This is the chief good of extensive institutions for education. They place us under diversified social influences; connect us with the dead as well as with the living; accumulate for us the thoughts of all ages and nations; take us out of the

narrow circle of a neighbourhood, or church, or community; make us fellow-citizens with the friends of truth under the whole heaven, and, through these various and often hostile influences, aid and encourage us to that independent moral judgment, and intellectual discrimination, by which our views are more and more purified and enlarged.

We regret that religion has not done more to promote this enlarged intercourse of minds, the great means, as we have seen, of reconciling social aids with personal independence. As yet, religion has generally assumed a sectarian form, and its disciples, making narrowness a matter of conscience, have too often shunned connexion with men of different views as a pestilence, and yielded their minds to the exclusive influences of the leaders and teachers of their separate factions. Indeed, we fear that in no department of life has the social principle been perverted more into an instrument of intellectual thraldom, than in religion. We could multiply proofs without end, but will content ourselves with a single illustration drawn from what are called "revivals of religion." We have many objections to these as commonly conducted; but nothing offends us more, than their direct and striking tendency to overwhelm the mind with foreign influences, and to strip it of all self-direction. In these feverish seasons, religion, or what bears the name, is spread, as by contagion, and to escape it is almost as difficult as to avoid a raging epidemic. Whoever knows any thing of human nature, knows the effect of excitement in a crowd. When systematically prolonged and urged onward, it subverts deliberation and self-control. The individual is lost in the mass, and borne away as in a whirlwind. The prevalent emotion,

be it love or hatred, terror or enthusiasm, masters every mind, which is not fortified by a rare energy, or secured by a rare insensibility. In revivals, a multitude are subjected at once to strong emotions, which are swelled and perpetuated by the most skilful management. The individual is never suffered to escape the grasp of the leading or subordinate agents in the work.* A machinery of social influences, of "inquiry meetings," of "anxious meetings," of conferences, of prayer meetings, of perpetual private or public impulses, is brought to bear on the diseased subject, until, exhausted in body and mind, he becomes the passive, powerless recipient of whatever form or impressions it may be thought fit to give him. Happily for mankind, our nature loses its sensibility to perpetual stimulants, and of consequence a revival is succeeded by what is called "a dull, dead, stupid season." This dull time is a merciful repose granted by Providence to the overwrought and oppressed mind, and gives some chance for calm, deliberate, individual thought and action. Thus the kindness of nature is perpetually counterworking the excesses of men, and a religion, which begins in partial insanity, is often seen to attain by degrees to the calmness and dignity of reason.

In the preceding remarks we have stated, at greater length than we intended, our views of the true and highest benefits of society. These seem to us great,

* We recollect seeing the following direction gravely given for managing revivals, in the book of a minister experienced in this work;—"Be careful never to kindle more fires than you can tend." In other words, Do not awaken and alarm more persons than you can place under constant inspection, and beset with perpetual excitements. What a strange rule for persons who profess to believe that these "fires" are "kindled" supernaturally by the Holy Spirit!

unspeakably great. At the same time, like all other goods, they are accompanied with serious perils. Society too often oppresses the energy which it was meant to quicken and exalt. — We now pass to our principal subject; to the associations for public purposes, whether benevolent, moral, or religious, which are so multiplied in the present age. And here we must confine ourselves to two remarks; the first intended to assign to such associations their proper place or rank, and the second, to suggest a principle, by which useful societies may be distinguished from such as are pernicious, and by which we may be aided in distributing among them our favor and patronage.

Our first remark is, that we should beware of confounding together, as of equal importance, those associations which are formed by our Creator, which spring from our very constitution, and are inseparable from our being, and those of which we are now treating, which man invents for particular times and exigencies. Let us never place our weak, short-sighted contrivances on a level with the arrangements of God. We have acknowledged the infinite importance of society to the developement of human powers and affections. But when we speak thus of society, we mean chiefly the relations in which God has placed us; we mean the connexions of family, of neighbourhood, of country, and the great bond of humanity, uniting us with our whole kind, and not Missionary societies, Peace societies, or Charitable societies, which men have contrived. These last have their uses, and some do great good; but they are no more to be compared with the societies in which nature places us, than the torches which we kindle on earth in the darkness of night, are to be paralleled with

the all-pervading and all-glorifying light of the sun. We make these remarks, because nothing is more common than for men to forget the value of what is familiar, natural, and universal, and to ascribe undue importance to what is extraordinary, forced, and rare, and therefore striking. Artificial associations have their use, but are not to be named with those of nature; and to these last, therefore, we are to give our chief regard.

We can easily illustrate, by examples, the inferiority of human associations. In Boston, there are two Asylums for children, which deserve, we think, a high place among useful institutions. Not a little time is spent upon them. Hundreds conspire to carry them on, and we have anniversaries to collect crowds for their support. And what is the amount of good accomplished? Between one and two hundred children are provided for, a number worthy of all the care bestowed on these charities. But compare this number with all the children of this city, with the thousands who throng our streets and our schools. And how are these fed, clothed, educated? We hear of no subscriptions, no anniversaries for their benefit; yet how they flourish compared with the subjects of Asylums! These are provided for by that unostentatious and unpraised society, which God has instituted, — a family. That shelter, home, which nature rears, protects them, and it is an establishment worth infinitely more than all the institutions, great or small, which man has devised. In truth, just as far as this is improved, as its duties are performed, and its blessings prized, all artificial institutions are superseded. Here then is the sphere for the agency of the wise and good Improve the family, strengthen and purify the relations of domestic life, and more is done for the hap-

piness and progress of the race than by the most splendid charities. — Let us take another example, the Hospital in the same metropolis; a noble institution, worthy of high praise. But where is it that the sick of our city are healed? Must you look for them in the Hospital? You may find there, perhaps, and should rejoice to find there, fifty or sixty beds for the poor. The thousands who sicken and die among us are to be found in their homes, watched over by the nursing care of mothers and sisters, surrounded by that tenderness which grows up only at home. — Let us take another example, Missionary societies. This whole country is thrown into excitement to support missions. The rich are taxed, and the poor burdened. We do not say that they are burdened without object; for Christianity is so infinite a blessing, that we consent to any honest methods of sending it abroad. But what is the amount of good effected? A few missionaries, we know not the precise number, are supported, of whom most have hitherto brought little to pass. Who can compare associations for this object, with churches, or those congregations of neighbours for regular worship, which Christianity has instituted, and to which nature has always prompted the professors of the same faith? Through these, incalculable aid is given to the support and diffusion of Christianity; and yet, through the propensity of human nature to exaggerate what is forced and artificial, one missionary at a distance is thought of more importance than a hundred ministers near, and the sending of him abroad is extolled as an incomparably greater exploit of piety, than the support of our own places of worship. We mean not to discourage Missionary societies; but the truth is, that Christianity is to be diffused incom-

parably more by caring for and promoting it in our natural relations, in our homes, in our common circles and churches, than by institutions endowed with the revenues of nations for sending it to distant lands. The great obstruction to Christianity among foreign nations is, its inoperativeness among the nations which profess it. We offer others a religion, which, in their apprehension, has done the givers no great good. The true course is, to rely less on our machinery of Cent societies, and National societies, and to rely more on the connexions and arrangements of nature or of God.

We beg not to be misunderstood. We would on no account discourage the Asylum, the Hospital, the Missionary society. All receive our cheerful support. We only mean to say, that our great sources of improvement and happiness are our natural relations and associations, and that to understand these better, and to attach ourselves more faithfully to their duties, are the great social means of carrying forward the world. A striking confirmation of these remarks may be found in the Romish Church. The probability is, that, under the Catholic religion in the dark ages, there were larger contributions to the relief of the distressed, in proportion to the wealth of communities, than at present, and contributions by associations which regarded almsgiving as one of their main duties; we mean the monasteries. But the monks, who quitted the relations of nature, the society which God had instituted, in order to form new and artificial bonds, more favorable, as they thought, to doing good, made a sad mistake. Their own characters were injured, and the very charities doled out from convents, increased the beggary which they hoped to relieve. So sacred is nature, that it can-

not be trampled on with impunity. We fear that something similar to the error just noticed among Catholics, is spreading among Protestants; the error of exalting societies of human device above our natural relations. We have been told that cases occur among us, and are not rare, in which domestic claims on kindness are set aside for the sake of making contributions to our great societies, and especially to foreign missions. So possessed are the minds of multitudes with the supreme importance of this object, that there seems to them a piety in withholding what would otherwise have been thought due to a poor relative, that it may be sent across oceans to Pagan lands. We have heard that delicate kindnesses, which once flowed from the more prosperous to the less prosperous members of a large family, and which bound society together by that love which is worth all bonds, are diminished since the late excitement in favor of the heathen. And this we do not wonder at. In truth, we rather wonder that any thing is done for the temporal comfort of friends, where the doctrine, on which modern missions chiefly rest, is believed. We refer to the doctrine, that the whole heathen world are on the brink of a bottomless and endless hell; that thousands every day, and millions every year, are sinking into this abyss of torture and woe; and that nothing can save them but sending them our religion. We see not how they, who so believe, can give their families or friends a single comfort, much less an ornament of life. They must be strongly tempted, one would think, to stint themselves and their dependents to necessaries, and to cast their whole remaining substance into the treasury of missionary societies.

We repeat it, let us not be misunderstood. Mission

ary societies, established on just principles, do honor to a Christian community. We regard them with any feeling but that of hostility. The readers of this work cannot have forgotten the earnestness, with which we recommended the support of a mission in India, at a time when we thought that peculiar circumstances invited exertion in that quarter. We only oppose the preference of these institutions to the natural associations and connexions of life. An individual who thinks that he is doing a more religious act in contributing to a missionary society, than in doing a needful act of kindness to a relative, friend, or neighbour, is leaving a society of God's institution, for one of man's making. He shows a perverted judgment in regard to the duties of his religion and in regard to the best means of spreading it. All that has been done, or ever will or can be done, by associations for diffusing Christianity, is a mere drop of the bucket, compared with what is done silently, and secretly, by the common daily duties of Christians in their families, neighbourhoods, and business. The surest way of spreading Christianity is, to improve Christian communities; and accordingly, he who frees this religion from corruption, and makes it a more powerful instrument of virtue where it is already professed, is the most effectual contributor to the great work of its diffusion through the world.

We now proceed to our second remark, in which we proposed to suggest a principle, by which the claims of different associations may be estimated. It is this;— The value of associations is to be measured by the energy, the freedom, the activity, the moral power, which they encourage and diffuse. In truth, the great object of all benevolence is, to give power, activity, and free-

dom to others. We cannot, in the strict sense of the word, *make* any being happy. We can give others the *means* of happiness, together with motives to the faithful use of them; but on this faithfulness, on the free and full exercise of their own powers, their happiness depends. There is thus a fixed, impassable limit to human benevolence. It can only make men happy through themselves, through their own freedom, and energy. We go further. We believe that God has set the same limit to his own benevolence. He makes no being happy, in any other sense than in that of giving him means, powers, motives, and a field for exertion. We have here, we think, the great consideration to guide us in judging of associations. Those are good which communicate power, moral and intellectual action, and the capacity of useful efforts to the persons who form them, or to the persons on whom they act. On the other hand, associations which in any degree impair or repress the free and full action of men's powers, are so far hurtful. On this principle, associations for restoring to men health, strength, the use of their limbs, the use of their senses, especially of sight and hearing, are highly to be approved, for such enlarge men's powers; whilst charitable associations, which weaken in men the motives to exertion, which offer a bounty to idleness, or make beggary as profitable as labor, are great calamities to society, and peculiarly calamitous to those whom they relieve. On the same principle, associations which are designed to awaken the human mind, to give to men of all classes a consciousness of their intellectual powers, to communicate knowledge of a useful and quickening character, to encourage men in thinking with freedom and vigor, to inspire an ardent love and pur-

suit of truth, — are most worthy of patronage; whilst such as are designed or adapted to depress the human intellect, to make it dependent and servile, to keep it where it is, to give a limited amount of knowledge, but not to give impulse and an onward motion to men's thoughts, — all such associations, however benevolent their professions, should be regarded as among the foes and obstructions to the best interests of society. On the same principle, associations aiming to purify and ennoble the character of a people, to promote true virtue, a rational piety, a disinterested charity, a wise temperance, and especially aiming to accomplish these ends by the only effectual means, that is, by calling forth men's own exertions for a higher knowledge of God and duty, and for a new and growing control of themselves, — such institutions are among the noblest; whilst no encouragement is due to such as aim to make men religious and virtuous by paralyzing their minds through terror, by fastening on them a yoke of opinions or practices, by pouring upon them influences from abroad which virtually annihilate their power over themselves, and make them instruments for others to speak through, and to wield at pleasure. We beg our readers to carry with them the principle now laid down in judging of associations; to inquire, how far they are fitted to call forth energy, active talent, religious inquiry, a free and manly virtue. We insist on these remarks, because not a few associations seem to us exceedingly exceptionable, on account of their tendency to fetter men, to repress energy, to injure the free action of individuals and society, and because this tendency lurks, and is to be guarded against, even in good institutions On this point we cannot but enlarge; for we deem it of the highest importance.

Associations often injure free action by a very plain and obvious operation. They accumulate power in a few hands, and this takes place just in proportion to the surface over which they spread. In a large institution, a few men rule, a few do every thing; and, if the institution happens to be directed to objects about which conflict and controversy exist, a few are able to excite in the mass strong and bitter passions, and by these to obtain an immense ascendency. Through such an association, widely spread, yet closely connected by party feeling, a few leaders can send their voices and spirit far and wide, and, where great funds are accumulated, can league a host of instruments, and by menace and appeals to interest can silence opposition. Accordingly, we fear that in this country, an influence is growing up, through widely spread societies, altogether at war with the spirit of our institutions, and which, unless jealously watched, will gradually but surely encroach on freedom of thought, of speech, and of the press. It is very striking to observe, how, by such combinations, the very means of encouraging a free action of men's minds may be turned against it. We all esteem the press as the safeguard of our liberties, as the power which is to quicken intellect by giving to all minds an opportunity to act on all. Now, by means of Tract societies, spread over a whole community, and acting under a central body, a few individuals, perhaps not more than twenty, may determine the chief reading for a great part of the children of the community, and for a majority of the adults, and may deluge our country with worthless sectarian writings, fitted only to pervert its taste, degrade its intellect, and madden it with intolerance. Let associations devoted to any objects which

excite the passions, be everywhere spread and leagued together for mutual support, and nothing is easier than to establish a control over newspapers. We are persuaded, that, by an artful multiplication of societies, devoted apparently to different objects, but all swayed by the same leaders, and all intended to bear against a hated party, as cruel a persecution may be carried on in a free country as in a despotism. Public opinion may be so combined, and inflamed, and brought to bear on odious individuals or opinions, that it will be as perilous to think and speak with manly freedom, as if an inquisition were open before us. It is now discovered, that the way to rule in this country is by an array of numbers, which a prudent man will not like to face. Of consequence, all associations aiming or tending to establish sway by numbers, ought to be opposed. They create tyrants as effectually as standing armies. Let them be withstood from the beginning. No matter whether the opinions which they intend to put down be true or false. Let no opinion be put down by such means. Let no error be suppressed by an instrument, which will be equally powerful against truth, and which must subvert that freedom of thought on which all truth depends. Let the best end fail if it cannot be accomplished by right and just means. For example, we would have criminals punished, but punished in the proper way, and by a proper authority. It were better that they should escape, than be imprisoned or executed by any man who may think fit to assume the office; for sure we are, that, by this summary justice, the innocent would soon suffer more than the guilty; and, on the same principle, we cannot consent that what we deem error should be crushed by the joint cries and denunciations of vast so-

cieties directed by the tyranny of a few; for truth has more to dread from such weapons than falsehood, and we know no truth against which they may not be successfully turned. In this country, few things are more to be dreaded, than organizations or institutions by which public opinion may be brought to bear tyrannically against individuals or sects. From the nature of things, public opinion is often unjust; but, when it is not embodied and fixed by pledged societies, it easily relents, it may receive new impulses, it is open to influences from the injured. On the contrary, when shackled and stimulated by vast associations, it is in danger of becoming a steady, unrelenting tyrant, brow-beating the timid, proscribing the resolute, silencing free speech, and virtually denying the dearest religious and civil rights. We say not that all great associations *must* be thus abused. We know that some are useful. We know, too, that there are cases, in which it is important that public opinion should be condensed, or act in a mass. We feel, however, that the danger of great associations is increased by the very fact, that they are sometimes useful. They are perilous instruments. They ought to be suspected. They are a kind of irregular government created within our constitutional government. Let them be watched closely. As soon as we find them resolved or disposed to bear down a respectable man or set of men, or to force on the community measures about which wise and good men differ, let us feel that a dangerous engine is at work among us, and oppose to it our steady and stern disapprobation.

We have spoken of the tendency of great institutions to accumulate power in a few hands. These few they make more active; but they tend to produce depend-

We have now laid down the general principles, which, as we think, are to be applied to associations for public objects. Another part of our work remains. We propose to offer some remarks on a few societies, which at this time demand our patronage, or excite particular attention. In doing this, we shall speak with our customary freedom; but we beg that we may not be understood as censuring the motives of those whose plans and modes of operation we condemn.

The associations for suppressing Intemperance form an interesting feature of our times. Their object is of undoubted utility, and unites the hearts of all good men. They aim to suppress an undoubted and gross vice, to free its victims from the worst bondage, to raise them from brutal degradation to the liberty and happiness of men. There is one strong presumption in favor of the means which they have used. We have never heard of their awakening enmity and counteraction. In one particular, some of them may have erred. We refer to the compact formed by their members for abstaining from wine. When we consider, that wine is universally acknowledged to be an innocent, and often salutary beverage, that Jesus sanctioned its use by miraculously increasing it at the marriage feast, that the Scriptures teach us to thank God for it as a good gift, intended to "gladden the heart of man," and when to these considerations we add, that wine countries are distinguished for temperance, we are obliged to regard this pledge as injudicious; and we regret it, because it may bring distrust and contempt on an excellent institution, and because its abandonment, for it cannot long continue, may be construed by some as a warrant for returning to inebriating liquors. In one view, the success of the efforts

against intemperance affords us peculiar satisfaction. It demonstrates a truth, little felt, but infinitely precious; namely, the recoverableness of human nature from the lowest depths of vice. It teaches us never to despair of a human being. It teaches us, that there is always something to work on, a germ to be unfolded, a spark which may be cherished, in the human soul. Intemperance is the most hopeless state into which a man can fall; and yet, instances of recovery from this vice have rewarded the recent labors of the philanthropist. Let philanthropy then rejoice in the belief, that the capacity of improvement is never lost, and let it convert this conviction into new and more strenuous efforts for the recovery of the most depraved.

We proced now to Bible societies. These need no advocates. Their object is so simple, unexceptionable, beneficent, that all Protestants, at least, concur in their support. By spreading the Bible without note or comment, they especially assert the right of private judgment, and are thus free from the great reproach of trenching on Christian freedom. Perhaps they have not always been conducted with sufficient prudence. We have particularly feared, that they might be open to the charge of indiscreet profusion. We believe it to be a good rule, that where the poor can give any thing for a Bible, no matter how little, they should be encouraged and incited to pay this part of the price. We believe, that it will be more valued, and more carefully preserved, where it has cost something. We do not think of the Bible, as the superstitious among Catholics and heathens do of relics and charms, as if its mere presence in a family were a necessary good. We wish some pledge that it will be treated with re-

spect, and we fear that this respect has been diminished by the lavishness with which it has been bestowed. One cause of the evil is, that societies, like individuals, have a spice of vanity, and love to make a fair show in their annual reports; and accordingly they are apt to feel as if a favor were conferred, when their books are taken off their hands. We think that to secure respect to the Bible is even more important than to distribute it widely. For this purpose, its exterior should be attractive. It should be printed in a fair, large type, should be well bound, and be provided with a firm case. This last provision seems to us especially important. The poor have no book-cases. Their Bibles too often lie on the same shelves with their domestic utensils: nor can it be doubted, that, when soiled, torn, dishonored by this exposure, they are regarded with less respect, than if protected with peculiar care.

We have a still more important remark to make in reference to Bible societies. In our last number, we noticed an edition of the New Testament recently published in Boston, and differing from those in common use, by a new translation of those passages of the Greek original, of which the true reading was lost or neglected when the received English version was made. This edition of the New Testament we stated to be undoubtedly more correct, more conformed to the original, than our common editions. On this point we speak strongly, because we wish to call to it the attention of Bible societies, and of all conscientious Christians. To such we say, — Here is a translation, undoubtedly more faithful to the original than that in common use. You have here in greater purity what Jesus Christ said, and what his Apostles wrote; and if so, you are bound by your

allegiance to Christ to substitute this for the common translation. We know, that uneducated Christians cannot settle this question. We therefore respectfully, and with solemnity, solicit for it the attention of learned men, of Christian ministers, of professors of theology of every sect and name. We ask for the calmest and most deliberate investigation, and if, as we believe, there shall be but one opinion as to the claims of the version which we have recommended; if all must acknowledge that it renders more faithfully the words of the inspired and authorized teachers of Christianity, then we see not how it can be denied the reception and diffusion which it deserves. We conceive, that, to Bible societies, this is a great question, and not to be evaded without unfaithfulness to our common Master, and without disrespect to the holy Scriptures. We fear, that there is a want of conscientiousness on this subject. We fear that the British and Foreign Bible Society has forfeited, in a measure, its claims to the gratitude and admiration of the church, by neglecting to secure the greatest possible accuracy and fidelity to the new translations which they have set forth. We hear continual expressions of reverence for the Bible; but the most unambiguous proofs of it, we mean, unwearied efforts to purify it from human additions, mutilations, and corruptions, remain to be given.

Before leaving the consideration of Bible societies, we cannot but refer to a very singular transaction in relation to the Scriptures, in which some of them are thought to be implicated. In some of our cities and villages, we are told, that the rich as well as the poor have been visited for the purpose of ascertaining whether they own the Bible. The object of this domiciliary

investigation we profess not to understand. We cannot suppose, that it was intended to lavish on the rich the funds which were contributed for spreading the Scriptures among the poor. One thing we know, that a measure more likely to irritate and to be construed into an insult, could not easily be contrived. As a sign of the times it deserves our notice. After this step, it ought not to surprise us should an Inquisition be established, to ascertain, who among us observe, and who neglect, the duties of private and family prayer. We might smile at this spirit, could we tell where it would stop. But it is essentially prying, restless, and encroaching, and its first movements ought to be withstood.

We now proceed to another class of associations; those which are designed to promote the observance of the Sabbath. The motives which gave birth to these, we respect. But we doubt the rectitude and usefulness of the object, and we fear, that what has begun in conscientiousness may end in intolerance and oppression. We cannot say of these associations, as of those which we have just noticed, that they aim at an unquestionable good, about which all good men agree. Not a few of the wisest and best men dissent from the principle on which these societies are built, namely, that the Jewish Sabbath is binding on Christians. Not a few of the profoundest divines and most exemplary followers of Christ have believed and still believe, that the Sabbath enjoined in the fourth commandment is a part of Judaism, and not of the Gospel; that it is essentially different from the Lord's-day, and that to enforce it on Christians is to fall into that error which Paul withstood even unto death, the error of adulterating Christianity by mixtures of a preparatory and very inferior religion.

We beg to be understood. All Christians, whom we know, concur in the opinion and the desire, that the Lord's-day, or the first day of the week, should be separated to the commemoration of Christ's resurrection, to public worship, to public Christian instruction, and in general to what are called the means of religion. This we gratefully accept and honor as a Christian rite. But not a few believe, that the Lord's-day and the ancient Sabbath are not the same institution, and ought not to be confounded; that the former is of a nobler character, and more important than the latter, and that the mode of observing it is to be determined by the spirit and purposes of Christianity, and not by any preceding law. This is a question about which Christians have differed for ages. We certainly wish that it may be debated till it is settled. But we grieve to see a questionable doctrine made the foundation of large societies, and to see Christians leagued to pass the sentence of irreligion on men equally virtuous with themselves, and who perhaps better understand the mind of Christ in regard to the Sabbath.

We know that it is confidently affirmed, that God, at an earlier period than the Jewish law, enjoined the Sabbath as a perpetual, universal, irrepealable law for the whole human race. But can this position be sustained? For ourselves we cannot see a trace of it in the Scriptures, those only sure records of God's revelation to mankind. We do indeed incline to believe, what many wise men have questioned, that there are appearances of the institution of the Sabbath at the beginning of the human race. We know that these are faint and few; yet we attach importance to them, because nature and reason favor the supposition of a

time having been set apart from the first as a religious memorial. Whilst, however, we incline to this view as most probable, we see no proofs of the perpetuity of the institution in the circumstance of its early origin. On the contrary, an ordinance or rite, given in the infancy of the human race, may be presumed to be temporary, unless its unchangeableness is expressly taught, or is necessarily implied in its very nature. The positive or ritual religion, which was adapted to the earlier, can hardly suit the maturer periods of the race. Man is a progressive being, and needs a progressive religion. It is one of the most interesting and beautiful features of the Sacred Writings, and one of the strong evidences of their truth, that they reveal religion as a growing light, and manifest the Divine Legislator as adapting himself to the various and successive conditions of the world. Allowing then the Sabbath to have been given to Adam, we could no more infer its perpetuity, than we can infer the perpetuity of capital punishment, as an ordinance of God, because he said to Noah, the second parent of the human race, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

Our opinion leans, as we have said, to the early institution of the Sabbath; but we repeat it, the presumptions on which our judgments rest are too uncertain to authorize confidence, much less denunciation. The greater part of the early Fathers of the Church, according to Calmet, believed that the law of the Sabbath was not given before Moses; and this, as we have observed, is the opinion of some of the most judicious and pious Christians of later times. Whilst disposed to differ from these, we feel that the subject is to be left to the calm decision of individuals. We want no

array of numbers to settle a doubtful question. One thing is plain, that, before Moses, not one precept is given in relation to the Sabbath, nor a hint of its unchangeableness to the end of the world. One thing is plain, that the question of the perpetuity of this institution is to be settled by the teachings of Jesus Christ, the great prophet, who alone is authorized to determine how far the institutions of religion which preceded him, are binding on his followers. For ourselves, we are followers of Christ, and not of Moses, or Noah, or Adam. We call ourselves Christians, and the Gospel is our only rule. Nothing in the Old Testament binds us, any further than it is recognised by, or incorporated into, the New. The great and only question, then, is, Does the New Testament, does Christianity, impose on us the ancient Sabbath?

To aid us in settling this question, we may first inquire into the nature and design of this institution; and nothing can be plainer. Words cannot make it clearer. According to the Old Testament, the seventh, or last day of the week, was to be set apart, or sanctified, as a day of rest, in commemoration of God's having rested on that day from the work of creation.* The dis-

* We beg our readers to observe, that we are now simply stating the account of the Sabbath which is given in the Old Testament. How this account is to be interpreted, is a question not involved in our present subject. We would, however, observe, that the rest here ascribed to God must be understood in a figurative sense. Properly speaking, God, who is incapable of fatigue, and whose almighty agency is unceasing, never rests. In finishing the work of creation, he did not sink into repose, or for a moment desist from the exercise of his omnipotence. A particular mode of his agency was discontinued; and, in accommodation to an uncultivated age, this discontinuance was called rest. It seems to us, that the Sabbath bears one mark of a temporary institution, in the fact of its being founded on a representation of God, which is true only in a figurative or popular sense, and which gives something like a shock to a mind,

tinguishing feature of the institution, is rest. The word Sabbath means rest. The event to be commemorated was rest. The reason for selecting the seventh, was, that this had been to the Creator a day of rest. The chief method prescribed for sanctifying the day was rest. The distinctive character of the institution could not have been more clearly expressed. Whoever reads the fourth commandment, will see, that no mode of setting apart the day to God is there prescribed, except in imitation of his rest. How far this constituted the sanctification of the Sabbath, will be seen from such passages as the following; — "You shall keep the Sabbath, for it is holy unto you. Every one that defileth it shall surely be put to death. For whosoever doeth any work therein, that soul shall be cut off from among his people." * A still more remarkable proof, that the sanctification of the Sabbath consisted in resting after the example of God, is furnished by Christ, who says, that "on the Sabbath-days the priests in the Temple *profane* the Sabbath." † So essential was rest to the hallowing of that day, that the work of offering victims, though prescribed by God himself, is said to profane it. There are indeed some expressions of Moses, indicating other methods of observing the day, for he calls it "a holy convocation"; but whether this phrase applies to other places beside the Temple; is uncertain. It is not improbable, indeed, that the people resorted to the Levites and Prophets on the Sabbath rather than other days; but we find no precept to this effect; and it is well known, that no synagogues or places of wor-

which has exalted its conceptions of the Divinity. Such an institution does not carry the impress of a perpetual and universal law.

* Exod. xxxi. 14; also Jer. xvii. 22. † Matt. xii. 5.

ship were built through Judea, until after the captivity. Rest, then, was the great distinction of the day. This constituted it a memorial, and give it its name; and we conceive, that the chief stress was laid on this circumstance, because the Sabbath was intended to answer a humane, as well as religious end; that is, to give relief to persons in servitude, and to inferior animals, a provision very much needed in an unrefined and semi-barbarous age, when slavery had no acknowledged rights, and when little mercy was shown to man or beast. In conformity to these views, we find the Jewish nation always regarding the Sabbath as a joyful day, a festival. In the time of Christ, we find him bidden to a feast on the Sabbath-day, and accepting the invitation; * and our impression is, that now, as in past times, the Jews divide the day between the synagogue and social enjoyment.

The nature and end of the Sabbath cannot be easily misunderstood. It was the seventh or last day of the week, set apart by God as a day of rest, in imitation and in commemoration of his having rested on that day from the creation. That other religious observances were with great propriety introduced into the day, and that they were multiplied with the progress of the nation, we do not doubt. But the distinctive observance, and the only one expressly enjoined on the whole people, was rest. Now we ask, Is the dedication of the seventh or last day of the week to rest, in remembrance of God's resting on that day, a part of the Christian religion? The answer seems to us plain. We affirm, in the first place, what none will contradict, that this institution is not enjoined in the New Testament, even by

* Luke xiv.

the faintest hint or implication; and in the next place, we maintain, that the Christian world, so far from finding it there, have by their practice disowned its authority.

This last position may startle some of our readers. But it is not therefore less true. We maintain, that the Christian world have in practice disowned the obligation of the Sabbath established by the fourth commandment. There is, indeed, a body of Christians called Sabbatarians, who strictly and religiously observe the fourth commandment. But they are a handful; they are lost, swallowed up in the immense majority of Christians, who have for ages ceased to observe the Sabbath prescribed from Sinai. True, Christians have their sacred day, which they call a Sabbath. But is it in truth the ancient Sabbath? We say, no; and we call attention to this point. The ancient Sabbath, as we have seen, was the last day of the week, set apart for rest, in commemoration of God's resting on that day. And is the first day of the week, a day observed in remembrance of Christ's resurrection from the dead, the same institution with this? Can broader marks between two ordinances be conceived? Is it possible that they can be confounded? Is not the ancient Sabbath renounced by the Christian world? Have we not thus the testimony of the Christian world to its having passed away? Who of us can consistently plead for it as a universal and perpetual law?

We know, that it is said, that the ancient Sabbath remains untouched; that Christianity has only removed it from the last to the first day of the week, and that this is a slight, unessential change, leaving the old institution whole and unbroken. To this we have several replies. In the first place, this change of days, which Christiani-

ty is supposed to make, is not unessential, but vital, and subversive of the ancient institution. The end of the ancient Sabbath was the commemoration of God's resting from his works, and, for this end, the very day of the week on which he rested was most wisely selected. Now we maintain, that to select the first day of the week, the very day on which he began his works, and to select and separate this in commemoration of another event, of Christ's resurrection, is wholly to set aside the ancient Sabbath. We cannot conceive of a more essential departure from the original ordinance. This substitution, as it is called, is a literal as well as virtual abolition. Such is our first remark. — We say, secondly, that not a word is uttered in the New Testament of the first day being substituted for the seventh. Surely so striking a change would not have been made in a universal and perpetual law of God, without some warning. We ask for some hint of this modification of the fourth commandment. We find not a syllable. — We say, thirdly, that the first Christians knew nothing of this substitution. Our evidence here is complete. The first converts to Christianity were Jews, and these converts had at first no conception of the design of Christianity to supersede the law of Moses. This law they continued to observe for years, and to observe it as rigorously as ever. When Paul visited Jerusalem, after many labors among the Gentiles, the elders said unto him, "Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe, and they are all zealous of the law." * Of course they all observed the Jewish Sabbath, or seventh day of rest, the greatest of Jewish festivals, whilst, as we all believe, they honored

* Acts xxi. 20.

also the first day, the remembrancer of Christ's resurrection. This state of things existed for years in the primitive church. The two days were observed together. Nothing more seems necessary to disprove unanswerably the common doctrine, that the Apostles enjoined the substitution of the first for the seventh day. — We will add one more argument. Paul commands the Colossian Christians to disregard the censures of those who judged or condemned them for not observing the Sabbath. "Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days."* This passage is very plain. It is evaded, however, by the plea, that the word "Sabbath" was used to express not only the seventh day, but other festivals or days of rest. But when we recollect, that the word is used by Paul in this place without any exception or limitation, and that it was employed at that time, most frequently and almost wholly, to express the seventh day, or weekly Sabbath, we shall see, that we have the strongest reason for supposing this institution to be intended by the Apostle. That a Christian, after reading this passage, should "judge," or condemn his brethren, for questioning or rejecting his particular notion of the Sabbath, is a striking proof of the slow progress of tolerant and liberal principles among men. We need not add, after these remarks, how unjustifiable we deem it to enforce particular modes of observing this day, by an array of associations.

Having thus stated what seem to us strong reasons against the perpetuity of the ancient Sabbath, perhaps some of our readers may wish to know our views of the Lord's-day, and, although the subject may seem foreign

* Col. ii. 16.

to the present article, we will give our opinion in a few words. We believe, that the first day of the week is to be set apart for the public worship of God, and for the promotion of the knowledge and practice of Christianity, and that it was selected for this end in honor of the resurrection of Christ. To this view we are led by the following considerations:—Wherever the Gospel was preached, its professors were formed into churches or congregations, and ministers were appointed for their instruction or edification. Wherever Christianity was planted, societies for joint religious acts and improvement were instituted, as the chief means of establishing and diffusing it. Now it is plain, that for these purposes regular times must have been prescribed; and, accordingly, we find, that it was the custom of the primitive Christians to hold their religious assemblies on the first day of the week, the day of Christ's resurrection. This we learn from the New Testament, and from the universal testimony of the earliest ages of the church. Wherever Christianity was spread, the first day was established as the season of Christian worship and instruction. Such are the grounds on which this institution rests. We regard it as altogether a *Christian institution*,—as having its origin in the Gospel,—as peculiar to the new dispensation; and we conceive, that the proper observation of it is to be determined wholly by the spirit of Christianity. We meet in the New Testament no precise rules as to the mode of spending the Lord's-day, as to the mode of worship and teaching, as to the distribution of the time not given to public services. And this is just what might be expected; for the Gospel is not a religion of precise rules. It differs from Judaism in nothing more than in its free character. It

gives great principles, broad views, general, prolific, all-comprehensive precepts, and intrusts the application of them to the individual. It sets before us the perfection of our nature, the spirit which we should cherish, the virtues which constitute "the kingdom of heaven within us," and leaves us to determine for ourselves, in a great measure, the discipline by which these noble ends are to be secured. Let no man, then, bind what Christ has left free. The modes of worship and teaching on the Lord's-day are not prescribed, and who will say that they cannot be improved? One reason of the neglect and limited influence of this institution is, that, as now observed, it does not correspond sufficiently to the wants of our times; and we fear, that it might even fall into contempt among the cultivated, should attempts be prosecuted to carry it back to the superstitious rigor by which it was degarded in a former age.

The associations for promoting the observance of the Sabbath, propose several objects, in which, to a certain extent, we heartily concur, but which, from their nature, are not susceptible of precise definition or regulation, and which, therefore, ought to be left, where Christianity has left them, to the consciences of individuals. They undoubtedly intend to discountenance labor on Sunday. Now, generally speaking, abstinence from labor seems to us a plain duty of the day; for we see not how its ends can otherwise be accomplished to any considerable extent. We do not believe, indeed, that this abstinence was rigidly practised by the first Christians at Jerusalem, who, as we have seen, gave up the seventh day to entire rest, and whose social duties could hardly have admitted the same appropriation of the following day. Neither do we believe that the converts, who

were made among the class of slaves in heathen countries, abstained from labor on the first day of the week; for, in so doing, they would have exposed themselves to the severest punishments, even to death, and we have no intimation that this portion of believers were regularly cut off by martyrdom. We know, however, that the early Christians, in proportion as they were relieved from the restrictions of Heathenism and Judaism, made the Lord's-day a season of abstinence from labor; and the arguments for so doing are so obvious and strong, that later Christians have concurred with them with hardly a dissenting voice. On this point there is, and can be, no difference. The change of Sunday into a working day, we should condemn as earnestly as any of our brethren. At the same time, we feel, that, in this particular, a Jewish rigor is not to be imposed on Christians, and that there are exigencies justifying toil on the first day, which must be left to individual judgment. The great purposes of this festival may certainly be accomplished, without that scrupulous, anxious shunning of every kind of work, which marked a Jewish Sabbath, and which, however proper under a servile dispensation, and in an age of darkness, would be in us superstition. We do not, for example, think Christians bound to prepare on Saturday every meal for the following day, or to study through the week how to remove the necessity of every bodily exertion on the approaching Sunday. We think, too, that cases may occur, which justify severe toil on this day; and we should judge a man unfaithful to himself and his family, ungrateful to Providence, and superstitious, who should lose a crop rather than harvest it during the portion of time ordinarily set apart for Christian worship. On these points, Christiani-

ty has left us free. The individual must be his own judge, and we deprecate the attempts of societies to legislate on this indefinite subject for their fellow-Christians.

Another purpose of the associations of which we speak, is, to stop the mail on Sunday. On this point, a great difference of opinion prevails among the most conscientious men. It may be remembered, that, in a former number of this work, there was an article on the Sabbath, discouraging this attempt to interrupt the mail. We think it right to say, that among the contributors to this work, and among its best friends, a diversity of sentiment exists in regard to this difficult question. In one respect, however, we all agree; and that is, in the inexpediency of organizing, in opposition to the Sunday mail, a vast association, which may be easily perverted to political purposes, which, from its very object, will be tempted to meddle with government, and which, by setting up a concerted and joint cry, may overpower and load with reproach the most conscientious men in the community.

Another purpose of these associations is, to discourage travelling on the Lord's-day. Nothing can well be plainer, than that unnecessary travelling on this day is repugnant to its duties and design, and is to be reproved in writing, preaching, and conversation. By unnecessary travelling, we mean that which is not required by some particular exigency. When we consider, however, that in such a community as ours, distinguished by extent and variety of intercourse, exigencies must continually occur, we feel, that here is another point with which societies have no right to interfere, and which must be left to the conscience of the individual.

In such a community as ours, how many persons may be found on every Sunday, the state of whose health, the state of whose families, the state of whose affairs, may require them to travel? It may happen, that another's property confided to our care may be lost, that a good object may fail, that some dying or departing friend may go from us unseen, if on this day we will not begin or pursue a journey. How often is it difficult for the traveller to find an inn, the quiet and comforts of which make it a fit residence for Sunday? An association against travelling on Sunday seems to us a very hazardous expedient; and its members, we think, will be fortunate if they escape the guilt of censoriousness and dictation, on a subject which Providence has plainly exempted from human legislation. We know that it will be said, that the license, which we give by these remarks, will be abused; and of this we have no doubt. We know no truth, no privilege, no power, no blessing, no right, which is not abused. But is liberty to be denied to men, because they often turn it into licentiousness? We have read of certain sects, which have denounced indiscriminately all sports and relaxations, because these, if allowed, will be carried to excess; and of others, which have prescribed by laws the plainest, coarsest dress, because ornament, if in any measure tolerated, would certainly grow up into extravagance and vanity. And is this degrading legislation never to end? Are men never to be trusted to themselves? Is it God's method to hem them in with precise prescriptions? Does Providence leave nothing to individual discretion? Does Providence withhold every privilege which may be abused? Does Christianity enjoin an exact, unvarying round of services, because

reason and conscience, if allowed to judge of duty, will often be misguided by partiality and passion? How liberal, generous, confiding, are nature, Providence, and Christianity, in their dealings with men! And when will men learn to exercise towards one another, the same liberal and confiding spirit?

We have thus considered some of the particular purposes of the association for promoting the observance of the Sabbath. We say, their "particular purposes." We apprehend there is a general one, which lurks in a portion of their members, which few perhaps have stated very distinctly to themselves, but which is not therefore the less real, and of which it is well to be forewarned. We apprehend that some, and not a small party, have a vague instinctive feeling, that the kind of Christianity which they embrace, requires for its diffusion a gloomy Sabbath, the Puritan Sabbath; and we incline to believe that they are desirous to separate the Lord's-day as much as possible from all other days, to make it a season of rigid restraint, that it may be a preparation for a system of theology, which the mind, in a natural, free, and cheerful state, can never receive. The Sabbath of the Puritans and their Calvinistic peculiarities go together. Now we wish the return of neither. The Puritans, measured by their age, have indeed many claims on respect, especially those of them who came to this country, and who, through their fortunate exile, escaped the corruption which the civil war and the possession of power engendered in the Puritan body of England. But sincere respect for the men of early times may be joined with a clear perception of their weaknesses and errors; and it becomes us to remember, that errors, which in them were innocent, because inevitable,

may deserve a harsher appellation if perpetuated in their posterity.

We have no desire, it will be seen, to create huge associations for enforcing or recommending the Lord's-day. We desire, however, that this interesting subject may engage more attention. We wish the Lord's-day to be more honored and more observed; and we believe that there is but one way for securing this good, and that is to make the day more useful, to turn it to better account, to introduce such changes into it as shall satisfy judicious men, that it is adapted to great and happy results. The Sunday which has come down to us from our fathers seems to us exceedingly defective. The clergy have naturally taken it very much into their own hands, and, we apprehend, that as yet they have not discovered all the means of making it a blessing to mankind. It may well excite surprise, how little knowledge has been communicated on the Lord's-day. We think, that the present age admits and requires a more extensive teaching than formerly; a teaching not only in sermons, but in more instructive exercises, which will promote a critical and growing acquaintance with the Scriptures; will unfold morality or duty, at once in its principles and vast details; will guide the common mind to larger views, and to a more religious use of nature and history; and will reveal to it its own godlike powers. We think, too, that this great intellectual activity may be relieved and cheered by a mixture of greater benevolent activity; by attention to public and private charities, and by domestic and social kindnesses.* It seems to us that we are waking

* Would not the business of our public charities be done more effectually on the Lord's-day than on any other, and would not such an ap-

up to understand the various uses to which Sunday may be applied. The present devotion of a considerable portion of it to the teaching of children, makes an important era in the history of the institution. The teaching of the ignorant and poor, we trust, is to follow. On this subject we cannot enlarge, but enough has been said to show in what way Sunday is to be recommended to the understandings and consciences of men.

In these remarks we have expressed our reverence for the Lord's-day. To us it is a more important day, and consecrated to nobler purposes than the ancient Sabbath. We are bound, however, to state, that we cannot acquiesce in the distinctions which are often made between this and other days, for they seem to us at once ungrounded and pernicious. We sometimes hear, for example, that the Lord's-day is set apart from our common lives to religion. What! Are not all days equally set apart to religion? Has religion more to do with Sunday than with any other portion of time? Is there any season, over which piety should not preside? So the day is sometimes distinguished as "holy". What! Is there stronger obligation to holiness on one day than another? Is it more holy to pray in the church than to pray in the closet, or than to withstand temptation in common life? The true distinction of Sunday is, that it is consecrated to certain means or direct acts of religion. But these are not holier than other duties. They are certainly not more important than their end, which is a virtuous life. There is, we fear, a superstition on this point, unworthy of the illumination of Christianity. We earnestly recommend the Lord's-day,

propriation of a part of this time accord peculiarly with the spirit of Christianity?

but we dare not esteem its duties above those of other days. We prize and recommend it as an institution through which our whole lives are to be sanctified and ennobled; and, without this fruit, vain, and worse than vain, are the most rigid observances, the most costly sacrifices, the loudest and most earnest prayers. We would on no account disparage the offices of the Lord's-day. We delight in this peaceful season, so fitted to allay the feverish heat and anxieties of active life, to cherish self-communion, and communion with God and with the world to come. It is good to meet, as brethren, in the church to pray together, to hear the word of God, to retire for a time from ordinary labors, that we may meditate on great truths more deliberately, and with more continuous attention. In these duties we see a fitness, excellence, and happiness; but still, if a comparison must be made, they seem to us less striking proofs of piety and virtue, than are found in the disinterestedness, the self-control, the love of truth, the scorn of ill-gotten wealth, the unshaken trust in God, the temperate and grateful enjoyment, the calm and courageous sufferings for duty, to which the Christian is called in daily life. It is right to adore God's goodness in the hour of prayer; but does it not seem more excellent to carry in our souls the conviction of this goodness, as our spring and pattern, and to breathe it forth in acts conformed to the beneficence of our Maker? It is good to seek strength from God in the church; but does it not seem more excellent, to use well this strength in the sore conflicts of life, and to rise through it to a magnanimous and victorious virtue? Such comparisons, however, we have no pleasure in making, and they are obviously exposed to error. The enlightened

Christian "esteemeth every day alike." To him, all days bring noble duties; bring occasions of a celestial piety and virtue; bring trials, in wrestling with which he may grow strong; bring aids and incitements, through which he may rise above himself. All days may be holy, and the holiest is that in which he yields himself, with the most single-hearted, unshrinking, uncompromising purpose, to the will of God.

We intended to add remarks on some other associations, particularly on the Peace society. But we have exceeded our limits, and must forbear. Our remarks have been free, but, we trust, will not be misunderstood. We look with interest and hope on the spirit of association, which characterizes our times. We rejoice in this, as in every manifestation of a desire for the improvement of mankind. We have done what we could to secure this powerful instrument against perversion. Through a wise and jealous care, we doubt not that it will minister to that only sure good, the intellectual and moral progress of the human race.

# THE UNION.

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Correspondence between John Quincy Adams, Esquire, President of the United States, and several Citizens of Massachusetts, concerning the Charge of a Design to dissolve the Union alleged to have existed in that State. Boston: 1829.

We have placed at the head of this article the title of a pamphlet, which has drawn much attention and excited much feeling. But in so doing, we have not thought of reviewing the controversy to which it relates. Our work is devoted to the inculcation and defence of great principles, and we are anxious to keep it free from irritating personalities. We are resolved to contend earnestly for what we deem truth, but we wish no contest with individuals. We are aware that cases may exist, in which justice to persecuted virtue, or to a good but suffering cause, may bind us to take part in temporary controversies. We feel, however, no such obligation in the present instance. In the Correspondence, those whom we deem injured have vindicated themselves too effectually to need other defenders. The charge of a Northern plot for dismembering the country has been fairly met and triumphantly refuted. We violate, therefore, no duty, in following our inclinations,

and in leaving this controversy to those whom it immediately concerns. — To prevent misapprehension, we will add, that in speaking of the charge which gave rise to the correspondence, as fully refuted, we mean not to accuse of wilful misrepresentation the individual by whom it was brought forward. We are not ignorant of the facility with which men deceive themselves, especially when their passions are inflamed. We mean not to deny, that Mr. Adams may imagine himself in possession of proofs which sustain his allegation; nor is it hard to explain the delusion. It is very possible, that twenty-five years ago, in a most agitated and convulsed state of the country, some among us questioned, whether the national government was likely to accomplish the good which it had promised. It is very possible, that, in that season of exasperation, some rash spirits among the Federalists gave utterance to passionate invectives, and inconsiderate menaces; and we can very easily understand, how a mind, disposed to misconstrue the words and actions of ardent partisans, might, in the midst of such excitement, become haunted with suspicions and visionary conspiracies. We think it very creditable to our country, that, in passing through the stormy season of which we have spoken, it teemed with no more panics and inventions of secret treasons; that so few plots were feigned or feared. We exceedingly regret, that Mr. Adams has made it necessary to his reputation, to fasten a reproach of this nature on a portion of his fellow-citizens. We regret, not only for public reasons, but for his own sake, that, on retiring from office, he cannot promise himself the happiness of his predecessors, the happiness of a calm and dignified retirement from public strife.

Our aim in the present article is to call the attention of our readers to a subject of great moment, which is directly brought before us by the Correspondence; we mean, the Importance of our National Union. This topic is one of transcendent and universal interest, and therefore deserves a place in a work devoted to the inculcation of those great principles, which involve the virtue and happiness of the community. In the discussion of such a topic, we shall of necessity recur to the events and struggles of the last thirty or forty years. But we shall do so, not for the purpose of reviving half-extinguished animosities, but in the hope of pointing out our danger as a nation, and of awakening a more enlightened attachment to our common country. We trust, that we claim for ourselves no singular virtue in saying, that we look back on the conflicts and revolutions of this period as on matters of history, and that we identify ourselves with them scarcely more than with events preceding our birth. It seems to us, that a good degree of impartiality in relation to this period, instead of requiring a high moral effort, is almost forced upon us by the circumstances of our times. Our age has been marked above all others by the suddenness, variety, and stupendousness of its revolutions. The events of centuries have been crowded into a single life. The history of the civilized world, since the bursting forth of the French Revolution, reminds us of one of the irregular dramas of Shakspeare, in which the incidents of a reign are compressed into an hour. Overwhelming changes have rushed upon one another too rapidly to give us time to comprehend them, and have been so multiplied as to exhaust our capacity of admiration. In consequence of this thronging and whirl of

events, the revolutions which we have witnessed seem to be thrown back, and to belong to a previous age. Our interest in them as contemporaries is diminished to a degree which excites our own wonder, and we think that we recall them with as little selfish partiality, as we experience on looking back on the transactions of past centuries. Perhaps we are deceived; but we can assure our readers, that we should not trust ourselves to speak as frankly as we may of the past, did we not believe, that our personal interest in it differs little from what we feel in other important periods of human history.

We have said, that our present topic is the importance of the Union, and we have selected it because it cannot, we apprehend, be too deeply impressed. No lesson should be written more indelibly on the hearts of our citizens. To secure to it the strong conviction with which it ought to be received, we have thought that we might usefully insist on the chief good which the Union confers; and we are the more disposed to do this, because we are not sure that this subject is sufficiently understood, because we sometimes apprehend that the people are not aware of the most essential benefit which they derive from the confederation, but are looking to it for advantages which it cannot bestow, and are in danger of exposing it to hazard by expecting from it more than it can accomplish. Of all governments we may say, that the good which they promote is chiefly negative, and this is especially true of the federal institutions which bind these States together. Their highest function is, to avert evil. Nor let their efficiency on this account be disparaged. The highest political good, liberty, is negative. It is the removal of ob-

structions. It is security from wrong. It confers no positive happiness, but opens a field in which the individual may achieve his happiness by his own unfettered powers. The great good of the Union we may express almost in a word. It preserves us from wasting and destroying one another. It preserves relations of peace among communities, which, if broken into separate nations, would be arrayed against one another in perpetual, merciless, and ruinous war. It indeed contributes to our defence against foreign states, but still more it defends us from one another. This we apprehend to be the chief boon of the Union, and its importance we apprehend is not sufficiently felt. So highly do we estimate it, that we ask nothing of the General Government, but to hold us together, to establish among the different States relations of friendship and peace; and we are sure, that our State Governments and individual energies will work out for us a happiness, such as no other people have yet secured.

The importance of this benefit is easy to be understood, by considering the sure and tremendous miseries which would follow disunion. For ourselves, we fear, that, bloody and mournful as human history now is, a sadder page, than has yet been written, might record the sufferings of this country, should we divide ourselves into separate communities. Our impressions on this subject are so strong, that we cannot resist the desire of communicating them to others. We fear that our country, in case of disunion, would be broken into communities, which would cherish towards one another singularly fierce and implacable enmities. We do not refer to the angry and vindictive feelings which would grow out of the struggles implied in a separation. There

are other and more permanent causes of hatred and hostility.

One cause, we think, would be found in the singularly active, bold, enterprising spirit, which actuates this whole country. Perhaps, as a people, we have no stronger distinction, than a thirst for adventure and new acquisitions. A quiet, cold, phlegmatic race might be divided with comparatively little peril. But a neighbourhood of restless, daring, all-grasping communities, would contain within itself the seeds of perpetual hostility. Our feverish activity would break out in endless competitions and jealousies. In every foreign market, we should meet as rivals. The same great objects would be grasped at by all. Add to this, that the necessity of preserving some balance of power, would lead each republic to watch the others with a suspicious eye; and this balance could not be maintained, in these young and growing communities, as easily as in the old and stationary ones of Europe. Among nations, such as we should form, which would only have begun to develope their resources, and in which the spirit of liberty would favor an indefinite expansion, the political equilibrium would be perpetually disturbed. Under such influences an irritable, and almost justifiable sensitiveness to one another's progress would fester into unrelenting hatred. Our neighbour's good would become to us a curse. Among such communities there could be no love, and would be no real peace. To obstruct one another's growth would be deemed the perfection of policy. Slight collisions of interest, which must perpetually recur, would be exaggerated by jealousy and hatred into unpardonable wrongs; and unprincipled statesmen would find little difficulty in swelling imagi-

nary grievances into causes of war. When we look at the characteristic spirit of this country, stimulated as it is by our youth and capacities of improvement, we cannot conceive of more active springs of contention and hatred, than would be created at once by our disunion into separate nations.

We proceed to the second and a very important consideration. Our possession of a common language, which is now an unspeakable good, would, in case of disunion, prove as great a calamity ; for it would serve, above all things, to multiply jealousies and exasperate bad passions. In Europe, different nations, having each its own language, and comparatively small communication, can act but little on each other. Each expresses its own self-esteem and its scorn of other communities in writings, which seldom pass its own bounds, and which minister to its own vanity and prejudices without inflaming other states. But suppose this country broken up into contiguous nations, all speaking the same language, all enjoying unrestrained freedom of the press, and all giving utterance to their antipathies and recriminations in newspapers, which would fly through all on the wings of the winds. Who can set bounds to the madness which such agents of mischief would engender ? It is a fact, too well known, that feelings of animosity among us towards Great Britain have been kept alive chiefly by a few publications from the latter country, which have been read by a very small part of our population. What then are we to expect in case of our disunion, when the daily press of each nation would pour forth on the neighbouring communities unceasing torrents of calumny, satire, ridicule, and invective ? An exasperating article from the pen of a distinguished man in one

republic, would in less than a week have found its way to every house and cottage in the adjoining States. The passions of a whole people would be kindled at one moment; and who of us can conceive the intensity of hatred which would grow from this continued, maddening interchange of intemperate and unmeasured abuse?

Another source of discord, in case of our separation, is almost too obvious to be mentioned. Once divided, we should form stronger bonds of union with foreign nations than with one another. That Europe would avail itself of our broken condition to establish an influence among us; that belligerents in the Old World would strive to enlist us in their quarrels; that our eagerness for commercial favors and monopolies would lay us open to their intrigues; that at every quarrel among ourselves we should be willing to receive aid from abroad, and that distant nations would labor to increase our dependence upon themselves by inflaming and dividing us against each other; these are considerations too obvious to need exposition, and as solemn and monitory as they are clear. From disunion, we should reap, in plentiful harvests, destructive enmities at home, and degrading subserviency to the powers of Europe.

We pass to another topic, particularly worthy of notice. In case of separation, party spirit, the worst foe of free states, would rage more furiously in each of the new and narrower communities, than now it does in our extensive Union; and this spirit would not only spread deadly hatred through each republic, but would perpetually embroil it with its neighbours. We complain of party rage even now; but it is mild and innocent compared with what we should experience, were our Union dissolved. Party spirit, when spread over a large coun-

try, is far less envenomed and ruinous than when shut up in small states. The histories of Greece and Rome are striking illustrations of this truth. In an extensive community, a party, depressed on one spot, finds sympathies and powerful protectors in another; and if not, it finds more generous enemies at a distance, who mitigate the violence of its nearer foes. The fury attending elections is exceedingly allayed, by the knowledge that the issue does not depend on one or another city or district, and that failure in one place is not the loss of the cause. It may be added, that in a large country, party spirit is necessarily modified and softened by the diversity of interests, views, and characters, which must prevail among a widely scattered people. It is also no small advantage, that the leaders of parties will generally be separated from one another by considerable distances, will move in remote spheres, instead of facing each other, and engaging perpetually in personal debate and conflict. Suppose these circumstances reversed; suppose the country broken into republics so small, as to admit a perfect unity and sympathy among the members of the same party, as to keep the leaders of opposite parties perpetually in one another's sight and hearing, as to make the fate of elections dependent on definite efforts and votes in particular places; and who can calculate the increase of personal animosity, of private rancor, of public rage? Nor would the spirit of party convulse only the separate communities. It would establish between them the most injurious relations. No passion seems to overpower patriotism and moral sentiment more effectually than this spirit. Those whom it binds, seem to throw off all other bonds. Inflamed parties are most unscrupulous as to means. Under great

excitement, they of course look round them on other communities to find means of ensuring triumph over their opponents. Of consequence, the political relations, which would subsist between the different republics that would spring up from our disunion, would be determined chiefly by party spirit; by a passion, which is most reckless of consequences, most prolific of discord, most prodigal of blood. Each republic would be broken into two factions, one in possession, and the other in pursuit of power, and both prepared to link themselves with the factions of their neighbours, and to sacrifice the peace and essential interests of the state to the gratification of ambition and revenge. Through such causes, operating in the Grecian republics, civil war added its horrors to foreign contests. We see nothing to avert from ourselves, if ever divided, the same unspeakable calamity.

In this exposition of the evils which would spring from disunion, we have spoken strongly, but, we trust, calmly. There is no need of exaggeration. It seems to us, that the imagination cannot easily exceed the truth. We do dread separation as the greatest of political evils, with the single exception of slavery. Undoubtedly a particular State may and ought to break the bond, if that bond is to be turned into a yoke of oppression. But much, very much should be endured before we expose ourselves to the calamities of separation. We particularly recommend the views which we have taken to those among us, whose interest in the Union is weakened by a vague idea, that a large community cannot be as well governed as a small. The reverse of this maxim, as we have seen, is true of a federal republic. Under despotisms, indeed, a vast ter-

ritory may increase the sufferings of the people, because the sovereign at the centre, however well disposed, cannot spread himself to the extremities, and distant provinces are almost of necessity given up to the spoliations of irresponsible governors. But, under the wise distribution of power in this country, we enjoy the watchful and minute protection of a local government, combined with the immense advantage of a widespread community. Greater means of prosperity a people cannot enjoy. Let us not be defrauded of them by selfish or malignant passions.

From the remarks now made, it will at once be understood, on what account chiefly we prize and would uphold our National Government. We prize it as our bond of union; as that which constitutes us one people; as preserving the different States from mutual jealousies and wars, and from separate alliances with foreign nations; as mitigating party spirit; in one word, as perpetuating our peace. So great, so inestimable is this good, that all other benefits and influences of the Federal Government seem to us as nothing. We would lay down this as the fundamental principle of its administration. The bearing of measures on our Union should be the chief aspect, under which they should be regarded by Congress. Taking this position, we are naturally led to some great maxims by which, as we conceive, our public affairs should be guided, and we now proceed to develope these, as well as to point out other means for securing our confederation.

In the first place, it seems to be important, that the administration of our government should be marked by the greatest possible simplicity. We hold this to be no unimportant means of perpetuating our Union. Laws

and measures should be intelligible, founded on plain principles, and such as common minds may comprehend. This indeed is a maxim to be applied to republican governments universally. The essential idea of a republic is, that the sovereignty is in the people. In choosing representatives they do not devolve the supreme power on others. By the frequency of elections, they are called to pass judgment on the representatives. It is essential to this mode of government, that, through a free press, all public measures should be brought before the tribunal of the people. Of course, a refined and subtile policy, or a complicated legislation, which cannot be understood but by laborious research and reasoning, is hostile to the genius of republican institutions. Laws should be plain and few, intended to meet obvious wants, and such as are clearly required by the great interests of the community. For ourselves, we are satisfied that all governments without exception can adopt no safer rule, than the simplicity which we have now recommended. The crying sin of all governments is, that they intermeddle injuriously with human affairs, and obstruct the processes of nature by excessive regulation. To us, society is such a complicated concern, its interests are affected by so many and such subtile causes, there are so many secret springs at work in its bosom, and such uncertainty hangs over the distant issues of human arrangements, that we are astonished and shocked at the temerity of legislators in interposing their contrivances and control, except where events and experience shed a clear light. Above all, in a country like our own, where public measures are to be judged by millions of people, scattered over a vast territory, and most of whom are engaged in laborious

occupations, we know not a plainer principle, than that the domestic aud foreign policy of government should be perspicuous and founded on obvious reasons, so that plain cases may in the main, if not always, be offered to popular decision. Measures, which demand profound thought for their justification, about which intelligent and honest men differ, and the usefulness of which cannot be made out to the common mind, are unfit for a republic. If in this way important national advantages should be sometimes lost, we ought to submit to the evil as inseparable from our institutions, and should comfort ourselves with thinking, that Providence never bestows an unmixed good, that the best form of government has its inconveniences, and that a people, possessing freedom, can afford to part with many means of immediate wealth. We have no fear, however, that a people will ever suffer by a rigid application of our rule. Legislators cannot feel too deeply the delicacy of their work, and their great ignorance of the com plicated structure and of the multiplied and secret relations of the social state ; and they ought not to hasten, nay, more, they ought to distrust, a policy, to the justice and wisdom of which the suffrage of public opinion cannot be decidedly and intelligently secured. In our republic, the aim of Congress should be to stamp its legislation with all possible simplicity, and to abstain from measures, which, by their complication, obscurity, and uncertainty, must distract the public mind, and throw it into agitation and angry controversy. Let it be their aim to cast among the people as few brands of discord as possible; and for this end, let the spirit of adventurous theory be dismissed, and the spirit of modesty, caution, and prudent simplicity preside over legis-

lation. In these remarks we have not forgotten that there are exigencies, in which government is compelled to determine its course without delay, amidst great hazards, and in a stormy, distracted state of the public mind. But these are exceptions to the ordinary course of human affairs, and to these, the principle which we have advanced is not to be applied.

We here proceed to another principle, still more important to the preservation of the Union. The General Government should correspond to its name; that is, should be general, or universal, in its spirit and operations. It should be characterized by nothing so strikingly as by impartiality, by the absence of sectional feeling, by a solicitude to distribute equally the public burdens, and to extend equal benefits to all members of the confederation. On this principle the Union chiefly depends. In a free community the strongest of all feelings is a jealousy of rights, and states cannot be long held together, if it shall be thought that the power, given for the general weal, is, through intrigue and selfish combinations, perverted to build up a portion of the confederacy at the expense of the rest. No stronger argument can be urged against a public measure, than that it has the appearance of a partial or unequal bearing on the country, or seems to indicate a disposition in the majority to sacrifice the common good to factious or sectional views. To guard against the jealousies of the States, should be the most anxious desire of our national legislators; and, for this purpose, they should aim to restrict themselves to general objects in which all may find a benefit, to refrain from touching narrow or local interests, especially those between which a rivalry subsists, to proportion the pressure of taxation accord-

ing to the most rigorous justice, to watch equally over the rights of all, and to exact no sacrifices but such as the common good plainly demands.

A weighty argument for limiting government to the simple and general legislation which we have now recommended, though not intimately connected with our main subject, deserves a brief notice. It is found in the great and growing extent of the country. The attention of Congress is already distracted and overwhelmed by the multiplicity of affairs, and every session it is more and more in danger of neglecting its proper objects and doing nothing well. We fear, that the most pressing business is the most frequently postponed. We refer to the claims of individuals on the government; and we call these the most pressing concerns, because the man who has been wronged by an unanticipated operation of the laws or of any public measures, has a right to immediate redress, and because delay of justice may be his ruin. Already we hear angry complaint and derision of the inefficiency of Congress, and the evil will increase, until that body shall select from a bewildering crowd of applications, its appropriate objects, and shall confine itself to a legislation demanded by the general voice, and by the obvious wants of the community.

The principles of legislation now laid down, seem to us to have an important bearing on two great questions, which have already agitated the country, and which, we fear, bode no good to the Union. We refer to the restrictive system and to internal improvement. The first, which proposes to protect certain branches of domestic industry, seems to us singularly wanting in that simplicity and impartiality, which, as we have said, should characterize our legislation. It cannot be un-

derstood by the mass of the people, and it will certainly divide them. In the first place, the restrictive system involves a Constitutional difficulty. We of this region, indeed, generally concede to Congress the right of limiting trade in general, or of annihilating particular branches of it, for the encouragement of domestic industry; but the argument for a narrower construction of the Constitution is certainly specious, and certainly strong enough to give to those on whom a tariff may press heavily, the consciousness of being wronged. In the next place, the general question of the expediency of restriction must be allowed by its advocates to be a difficult one. The growing light of the age certainly seems to oppose it, and the statements and reasonings by which it is defended, even if founded in truth, are yet so intricate and so open to objection, that vast numbers even of the enlightened cannot be satisfied of their validity. But, supposing restriction to be admitted, the question as to its extent, as to the kinds of industry which shall be protected, as to the branches of trade which shall be sacrificed, this question is the most perplexing which can be offered to popular discussion, and cannot fail to awaken cupidity, jealousy, and hatred. From the nature of the case, the protection must be unequally extended, nor can any wisdom balance the losses to which different States will be exposed. A restrictive tariff is necessarily a source of discord. To some portions of the country it must be an evil, nor will they suffer patiently. Disadvantages imposed by nature, communities will bear, but not those which are brought on them by legislation. We have indeed various objections to the whole system of protection. We believe it to be deceptive throughout. We also oppose it, on the ground

that our country, in adopting it, abandons its true and honorable position. To this country, above all others, belongs, as its primary duty and interest, the support of liberal principles. It has nothing in its institutions congenial with the maxims of barbarous ages, with the narrow, monopolizing, restrictive legislation of antiquated despotisms. Freedom, in all its forms, is our life, strength, prosperity; and every system at war with it, however speciously maintained, is a contradiction to our character, and, wanting harmony with our spirit, must take something, however silently, from the energy of the institutions which hold us together. As citizens of the world, we grieve that this country should help to prolong prejudices, which even monarchy is outgrowing; should, in imitation of meddling despotisms, undertake to direct the industry and capital of the citizen, and especially should lose sight of that sublime object of philanthropy, the promotion of free, unrestricted commerce through the world. As patriots, we grieve that a precedent has been afforded for a kind of legislation, which, if persisted in, will almost certainly loosen, and may rupture, the Union. The principal excellence of the late tariff is, that it is so constructed as to please no one, that even its friends pronounce it an abomination; for, by offending and injuring all, it excites less animosity in the principal sufferers. Tariffs never will be impartial. They will always, in a greater or less degree, be the results of selfish combinations of private and public men, through which a majority will be secured to particular interests; and such is the blindness of avarice, that to grasp a short-lived, partial good, the infinite blessings of union will be hazarded, and may be thrown away.

If we may be allowed a short digression, we would

say, that we have no partiality to tariffs of any kind, not even to those which are laid on imports for the purpose of raising revenue. We suppose that they are necessary at present, especially where they have become the habit of the people, and we are not insensible to the facility they afford for collecting the revenue. But we should rejoice, if by some great improvement in finance, every custom-house could be shut from Maine to Louisiana. The interests of human nature require, that every fetter should be broken from the intercourse of nations, that the most distant countries should exchange all their products, whether of manual or intellectual labor, as freely as the members of the same community. An unrestricted commerce we regard as the most important means of diffusing through the world knowledge, arts, comforts, civilization, religion, and liberty; and to this great cause we would have our country devoted. We will add, that we attach no importance to what is deemed the chief benefit of tariffs, that they save the necessity of direct taxation, and draw from a people a large revenue without their knowledge. In the first place, we say, that a free people ought to know what they pay for freedom, and to pay it joyfully, and that they should as truly scorn to be cheated into the support of their government, as into the support of their children. In the next place, a large revenue is no blessing. An overflowing treasury will always be corrupting to the governors and the governed. A revenue, rigorously proportioned to the wants of a people, is as much as can be trusted safely to men in power. The only valid argument against substituting direct for indirect taxation, is the difficulty of ascertaining with precision the property of the citizen. Happy would it

be for us, could tariffs be done away, for with them would be abolished fruitful causes of national jealousies, of war, of perjury, of smuggling, of innumerable frauds and crimes, and of harassing restraint on that commerce which should be free as the winds.

We consider many of the remarks made in reference to tariffs as applicable to internal improvements. These also involve a Constitutional question of no small difficulty; and it seems impossible that they should be prosecuted with any degree of impartiality. We will not say, that an extensive system of internal improvements, comprehending and connecting the whole country, and promising great, manifest, and universal good, may not be framed. But let Congress propose narrow, local improvements, and we need no prophet to foretell the endless and ever-multiplying intrigues, the selfish combinations, the jealousies, and discontents which will follow by a necessity as sure as the laws of nature. An irresistible temptation will be offered to unprincipled bargains between states and legislators, and the treasury, sending out partial streams, will become a fountain of bitterness and discord.

Let it not be said, that most of the proposed improvements are designed to promote intercourse, and that thus they favor what we conceive to be the great end of government, by binding us together. We answer, that the General Government already promotes intercourse incomparably more than all other causes combined, and we are unwilling to put to hazard this actual beneficent influence by striving to extend it. Government already does more for this object than all the canals, railroads, and other internal improvements, which human ingenuity can devise, and this it does by that

negative influence, which, as we have often said, is its chief function. This it does by making us one people, by preserving us from being broken into different communities, by preventing those obstructions to a free interchange of commodities, which, in case of disunion, would at once rise up between us; by preserving us from national rivalries, from the war of tariffs, and from open and ruinous hostility. We grant that cases may occur, in which national advantage may be lost, or useful objects delayed, for want of positive interference of government in the work of internal improvement. But the wisdom of nations, like that of individuals, consists very much in a willingness to forego near and inferior benefits for permanent security. We have, however, little apprehension of much injury resulting from the forbearance of government in this particular. Let Congress hold us together, and keep us in peace, and the spirit of the people will not slumber. It will pour itself forth through our state governments, through corporations, and through individual enterprise; and who that observes what it has already done can set limits to its efficiency? Since the adoption of the Federal Constitution, nothing has contributed so much to extend intercourse through the States as the invention of steamboats. No legislation, and no possible direction of the revenue to public improvements, could have effected so much as the steam-engine; and this was contrived, perfected, and applied to navigation by the genius and wealth of individuals. Next to this agent, the most important service to internal communication has been rendered by the New-York Canal, and this was the work of a State. With such examples, we need not fear, that our progress will be arrested by the confinement of

the General Government to general objects. We are not sure, that, were every objection which we have stated removed, we should be anxious to interest our national legislature in public improvements. As a people, we want no new excitement. Our danger is from over action, from impatient and selfish enterprise, from feverish energy, from too rapid growth, rather than from stagnation and lethargy. A calm, sober, steady government is what we chiefly need. May it be kept from the hands of theorists and speculators.

We have not yet exhausted the question, how government may best strengthen and perpetuate our Union. There is one of its establishments, which, in this point of view, we highly value, and which we fear is not sufficiently prized for the highest benefit which it confers. We refer to the Post-office. The facilities which this institution affords to the government for communication with all parts of the country, are probably regarded by many as the most important national service which it renders. But it does incomparably more for us as a community. It does much towards making us one, by admitting free communication between distant parts of the country, which no other channel of intercourse could bring together. It binds the whole country in a chain of sympathies, and makes it in truth one great neighbourhood. It promotes a kind of society between the seashore and the mountains. It perpetuates friendships between those who are never to meet again. It binds the family in the new settlement and the half-cleared forest to the cultivated spot from which it emigrated. It facilitates, beyond calculation, commercial connexions, and the interchange of products. On this account, we always grieve to see a statement of the

revenue accruing to government from the Post-office. It ought not to yield a cent to the treasury. It should simply support itself. Such importance do we attach to the freest communication between all parts of the country, so much do we desire that the poor, as well as rich, may enjoy the means of intercourse, that we would sooner have the Post-office a tax on the revenue, than one of its sources.

We pass to another method by which the government is to strengthen the Union. We know not a more important one. It is, to give dignity and independence to the National Judiciary. Let Congress feel, let the people feel, that to this department the security of the Union is especially committed, that it is the great preservative power among our institutions, and that its sanctity cannot be too jealously protected. Its office is, to settle peacefully the questions between the different States and their citizens, which, without it, would be settled by arms. What beneficence and dignity belong to this function! Nor is this all. It affords to citizens, who feel themselves aggrieved by what they deem an unconstitutional law, the means of peaceful resistance. It gives them an opportunity of being heard before a tribunal, on which the most solemn obligations to justice are laid, and which is eminently fitted to be an umpire between the citizen and the legislature. We know not how government can contribute more effectually to its own stability, than by reverencing and guarding the rights of the National Judiciary. A Congress, which should trench on its independence, ought to be counted guilty of a species of sacrilege.

From considering the importance of the Judiciary to our Union, we are naturally led to another department

of the government, and one which is particularly worthy of attention, because at the present moment it seems to menace our confederation more seriously than any other cause. We refer to the Executive Department. We refer to the struggles which the election to the Presidency has again and again provoked. These are too solemn and fearful to be overlooked. A remedy must be found, or the country will be thrown into perpetual convulsions, and split into factions devoted each to a chief. We shall waste ourselves in struggles for a few leaders, who by their prominence will become dearer to a people than their institutions, and in fighting for our favorites we may become their slaves.

This evil we regard as a growing one ; and we know but one remedy for it. The people must acquire a just self-respect. This they want. It has been repressed by false notions about government, which have come down from ages of monarchy. The spirit of freedom, of which we so much boast, has not yet given a due elevation of sentiment to the community ; and therefore the community basely binds itself to leaders as if they were its superiors. A people should understand its own greatness and dignity too well to attach much importance to any individual. It should regard no individual as necessary to it, nor should it suffer any one to urge his claims on its gratitude. It should feel, that it has a right to the services of its members, and that there is no member with whose services it cannot dispense. It should have no idols, no favorites. It should annihilate with its frown, those who would monopolize its power, or bring it into subserviency to their own glory. No man's name should be much on its lips. It should bind up in no man its prosperity and honor.

A free community, indeed, has need of a presiding officer, but it depends on no individual as alone fitted for the office; and still more, it needs a President, not to be its master, but to express and execute its own will. This last thought is fundamental, and never to be forgotten. The only law of a free people is the will of the majority, or public sentiment; and to collect, embody, utter, and execute this, is the great end of its civil institutions. Self-government is its great attribute, its supreme distinction, and this gives to office in a free state an entirely different character from what it possesses in despotic countries. The difference, however, is overlooked among us, and the same importance is attached to office, as if it conferred absolute power.

We repeat it, the supreme law in a free state is its own will, and consequently, among such a people, the highest power does not necessarily belong to him who is clothed with office, but to him who does most, in whatever sphere, to guide and determine the public mind. Office is a secondary influence, and indeed its most enviable distinction consists in the opportunities which it affords for swaying the opinions and purposes of the community. The nominal legislator is not always the real one. He is often the organ of superior minds, and, if the people be truly free, his chief function is, to give form and efficiency to the general will. Even in monarchies, where a free press is enjoyed, the power passes more and more from the public functionary to the master-spirits who frame the nation's mind. Thus the pen of Burke rivalled the sceptre of his sovereign. The progress of freedom and of society is marked by this fact, that official gives place to personal, intellectual, and moral dignity. It is a bad omen, where office

is thought the supreme good, and where a people sees in the public functionary, not an organ of its own will, but a superior being, on whom its peace and happiness depend.

We mean not to deny the necessity of office. We know that the President fills an important place. We know that the community has an interest in his integrity and wisdom, and that it is disgraced and injured by placing an incompetent or unprincipled man in the most conspicuous station. To the President are confided important functions, but not such functions as can be discharged only by one or two individuals in the country, not such as ought to make him an object of idolatry or dread, not such as should draw to him any extraordinary homage, not such as to justify intense desire in the candidate, or intense excitement in the people. Under institutions really free, no office can exist, which deserves the struggles of ambition. Did our Constitution create such an office, it would prove its authors to have been blind or false to their country's dignity and rights. But that noble charter is open to no such reproach. The Presidency, the highest function in the state, is exceedingly bounded by the Constitution, and still more by the spirit of the community. A President has been, and may often be, one of the least efficient men in the government. We need not go far for proof. In both houses of Congress there were men, whose influence over the country was greater than that of the last President. He indeed contributed to keep the wheel of government in motion. But we ask, What new impulse did he give it? What single important measure did he originate? Was there a man in office more fettered and thwarted? We talk of the administrations

of Mr. Monroe and Mr. Adams. We ask, What impression of themselves have they left on legislation and on public affairs? They gave no spring to the public mind. A popular senator or representative did more to sway the community. And this is as it should be. We rejoice, that official influence is so restricted, that the people are not mere echoes of a single voice, that no man can master his fellow-citizens, that there is a general, all-pervading intelligence, which modifies, controls, and often neutralizes, the opinion and will of the highest public functionary.

We have spoken of the Presidency as it has actually existed, and as it must in a great measure exist whilst we are free; and yet, through a delusion which has come down from past ages, this office, so limited in power, so obstructed by the legislative branches and by public opinion, which is conferred on the individual at the longest but for eight years, and from which he retires to a seclusion, where scarcely an eye follows, or a voice of approbation cheers him, this office, to our disgrace, is coveted by an insane ambition, as if it were an hereditary throne, and the people are as much excited and disturbed, when called to fill it, as if they were choosing a master for life at whose feet the country was to be laid an unprotected victim. To our shame be it said, for the last eight years every interest of the nation has been postponed to the comparatively inferior concern of choosing a President. The national legislature, forgetting its appointment to watch over the general weal, has wasted and worse than wasted its annual sessions in intrigues for the advancement of rival candidates. The most important measures have been discussed and decided, not with reference to the country,

but chiefly according to their bearings on what has been called the Presidential election. So sadly have we wanted the self-respect which belongs to freemen! In these disgraceful transactions, in this shameful excitement spread through the community, we see, that, as a people, we have not drunk as deeply as we imagine into the lofty spirit of liberty. In proportion as a people become free, in proportion as public sentiment reigns, office ceases to be a distinction, political ambition expires, the prizes of political ambition are withdrawn, the self-respect of the people preserves it from bowing to favorites or idols. Whilst it is the characteristic of despotism, that the ruler is every thing and the people comparatively nothing, the reverse is the grand distinction of a free state. This distinction we have yet to learn; and it cannot be learned too thoroughly. Unless we are preserved by a just self-respect from dividing into factions for the elevation of leaders, we shall hold our Union and our rights by a very uncertain tenure. Better were it to choose a President by lot from a hundred names to which each State shall contribute its fair proportion, than repeat the degrading struggle through which we have recently passed.

We close this topic by entreating our citizens to remember the great argument in favor of hereditary monarchy. It may be expressed in few words. "The highest office in a nation," says the monarchist, "ought to be hereditary, because it is an object too dazzling and exciting to be held up for competition. Such a prize, offered to the aspiring, must inflame to madness the lust of power, and engender perpetual strife. A people having such a gift to bestow will be exposed to perpetual arts and machinations. Its passions will

never be allowed to sleep. Factions, headed by popular chiefs and exasperated by conflict, will at length resort to force, and, in the storms which will follow, the Constitution will be prostrated, and the supreme power be the prey of a successful usurper. The peace and stability of a nation demand, that the supreme power should be placed above rivalry, and beyond the hopes of ambition, and this can only be done by making it hereditary." Such is the grand argument in favor of monarchy. As a people, we have done too much to confirm it. It is time that we proved ourselves more loyal to freedom. We shall do well to remember, that a republic, broken into parties which have the chief magistracy for their aim, and thrown into perpetual agitation by the rivalry of popular leaders, is lending a mournful testimony to the reasonings of monarchists, and accelerating the fulfilment of their sinister forebodings.

Much remains to be said of the means of perpetuating the Union, and of the dangers to which it is exposed. But we want time to prosecute the subject. The injuries with which the confederation is menaced by party spirit and a sectional spirit, are too obvious to need exposition. The importance of a national literature to our Union and honor, deserves particular consideration. But the topic is too great for our present limits, and we reserve it for future discussion.*

We intended to close this article with some remarks on the conduct of the different parties in this country in relation to the Union, for the purpose of showing that all have occasionally been wanting in fidelity to

* [The "Remarks on National Literature," p. 243, having been subsequently written, ought to have followed the present article. — *Ed.*]

it. But the subject would necessarily expand itself beyond the space allowed us. Still we cannot wholly abandon it. One branch of it is particularly recommended to us by the Correspondence at the head of this review. The merits or the demerits of the Federal party in respect to our Union, seem to be in a measure forced on our consideration; and we are the more willing to give a few thoughts to the topic, because we think that we understand it, and because we trust that we can treat it dispassionately. Our attachment to this party we have no desire to conceal; but our ideas of the allegiance due to a party are exceedingly liberal. We claim the privilege of censuring those with whom we generally agree; and we indignantly disclaim the obligation of justifying in the mass whatever they may please to do. Of the Federalists therefore we shall speak freely. We have no desire to hide what we deem to be their errors. They belong now to history, and the only question is, how their history may be made most useful to their country and to the cause of freedom. Before we proceed, however, we beg to remark, that in this, as in every part of the present review, we write from our own convictions alone, that we hold no communication with political leaders, and that we are far from being certain of the reception which our views will meet from our best friends.

A purer party than that of the Federalists, we believe, never existed under any government. Like all other combinations it indeed contained weak and bad men. In its prosperity, it drew to itself seekers for office. Still, when we consider that it enjoyed the confidence of Washington to his last hour; that its leaders were his chosen friends; that it supported and strength-

ened his whole administration; that it participated with him in the proclamation and system of neutrality, through which that great man served his country as effectually as during the revolutionary war; when we consider, that it contributed chiefly to the organization of the Federal Government in the civil, judicial, financial, military, and naval departments; that it carried the country safely and honorably through the most tempestuous days of the French Revolution; that it withstood the frenzied tendencies of multitudes to alliance with that power, and that it averted war with Great Britain during a period, when such a war would have bowed us into ruinous subserviency to the despot of France; when we consider these things, we feel, that the debt of this country to the Federal party is never to be extinguished.

Still we think, that this party in some respects failed of its duty to the cause of the Union and of freedom. But it so failed, not through treachery; for truer spirits the world could not boast. It failed through despondence. Here was the rock on which Federalism split. Too many of its leading men wanted a just confidence in our free institutions and in the moral ability of the people to uphold them. Appalled by the excesses of the French Revolution, by the extinction of liberty in that republic, and by the fanaticism with which the cause of France was still espoused among ourselves, they began to despair of their own country. The sympathies of the majority of our people with the despotism of France, were indeed a fearful symptom. There seemed a fascination in that terrible power. An insane admiration for the sworn foe of freedom, joined with as deadly a hatred towards England, so far pervaded the

country, that to the Federalists we seemed enlisted as a people on the side of despotism, and fated to sink under its yoke. That they had cause for fear, we think. That they were criminal in the despondence to which they yielded, we also believe. They forgot, that great perils call on us for renewed efforts, and for increased sacrifices in a good cause. That some of them considered the doom of the country as sealed, we have reason to believe. Some, disappointed and irritated, were accustomed to speak in bitter scorn of institutions, which, bearing the name of free, had proved unable to rescue us from base subserviency to an all-menacing despot. The Federalists as a body wanted a just confidence in our national institutions. They wanted that faith, which hopes against hope, and which freedom should inspire. Here was their sin, and it brought its penalty; for, through this more than any cause, they were driven from power. By not confiding in the community, they lost its confidence. By the depressed tone with which they spoke of liberty, their attachment to it became suspected. The taint of anti-republican tendencies was fastened upon them by their opponents, and this reproach no party could survive.

We know not in what manner we can better communicate our views of the Federal party, of its merits and defects, than by referring to that distinguished man, who was so long prominent in its ranks; we mean the late George Cabot. If any man in this region deserved to be called its leader, it was he, and a stronger proof of its political purity cannot be imagined, than is found in the ascendency which this illustrious individual maintained over it. He was the last man to be charged with a criminal ambition. His mind rose far above

office. The world had no station which would have tempted him from private life. But in private life, he exerted the sway which is the worthiest prize of a lofty ambition. He was consulted with something of the respect which was paid to an ancient oracle, and no mind among us contributed so much to the control of public affairs. It is interesting to inquire by what intellectual attributes he gained this influence; and, as his character now belongs to history, perhaps we may render no unacceptable service in delineating its leading features.

We think, that he was distinguished by nothing so much as by the power of ascending to general principles, and by the reverence and constancy with which he adhered to them. The great truths of history and experience, the immutable laws of human nature, according to which all measures should be framed, shone on his intellectual eye with an unclouded brightness. No impatience of present evils, no eagerness for immediate good, ever tempted him to think, that these might be forsaken with impunity. To these he referred all questions on which he was called to judge, and accordingly his conversation had a character of comprehensive wisdom, which, joined with his urbanity, secured to him a singular sway over the minds of his hearers. With such a mind, he of course held in contempt the temporary expedients and motley legislation of commonplace politicians. He looked with singular aversion on every thing factitious, forced, and complicated in policy. We have understood, that by the native strength and simplicity of his mind, he anticipated the lights, which philosophy and experience have recently thrown on the importance of leaving enterprise, industry, and com-

merce free. He carried into politics the great axiom which the ancient sages carried into morals, "Follow Nature." In an age of reading, he leaned less than most men on books. A more independent mind our country perhaps has not produced. When we think of his whole character, when with the sagacity of his intellect we combine the integrity of his heart, the dignified grace of his manners, and the charm of his conversation, we hardly know the individual, with the exception of Washington, whom we should have offered more willingly to a foreigner as a specimen of the men whom America can produce.

Still we think, that his fine qualities were shaded by what to us is a great defect, though to some it may appear a proof of his wisdom. He wanted a just faith in man's capacity of freedom, at least in that degree of it which our institutions suppose. He inclined to dark views of the condition and prospects of his country. He had too much the wisdom of experience. He wanted what may be called the wisdom of hope. In man's past history he read too much what is to come, and measured our present capacity of political good too much by the unsuccessful experiments of former times. We apprehend, that it is possible to make experience too much our guide; and such was the fault of this distinguished man. There are seasons, in human affairs, of inward and outward revolution, when new depths seem to be broken up in the soul, when new wants are unfolded in multitudes, and a new and undefined good is thirsted for. These are periods, when the principles of experience need to be modified, when hope and trust and instinct claim a share with prudence in the guidance of affairs, when in truth *to dare* is the highest

wisdom. Now, in the distinguished man of whom we speak, there was little or nothing of that enthusiasm, which, we confess, seems to us sometimes the surest light. He lived in the past, when the impulse of the age was towards the future. He was slow to promise himself any great melioration of human affairs; and, whilst singularly successful in discerning the actual good, which results from the great laws of nature and Providence, he gave little hope that this good was to be essentially enlarged. To such a man, the issue of the French Revolution was a confirmation of the saddest lessons of history, and these lessons he applied too faithfully to his own country. His influence in communicating skeptical, disheartening views of human affairs, seems to us to have been so important as to form a part of our history, and it throws much light on what we deem the great political error of the Federalists.

That the Federalists did at one period look with an unworthy despondence on our institutions, is true. Especially when they saw the country, by a declaration of war against England, virtually link itself with that despotism which menaced the whole civilized world, their hearts sunk within them; and we doubt not, that, in some cases, their mixed anger and gloom broke forth in reckless speeches, which, to those who are ignorant of the workings of the passions, might seem to argue a scorn for the confederation and for all its blessings. So far they failed of their duty; for a good citizen is never to despair of the republic, never to think freedom a lost cause.

The political sin of the Federal party we have stated plainly. In the other great party, examples of unfaithfulness to the Union might also be produced. Who-

ever reverts to the language of Virginia on the subject of the alien and sedition laws, or to the more recent proceedings and declarations of Georgia in respect to the Indian territories within her jurisdiction, or to the debates and resolutions of the legislature of South Carolina at its last session, will learn, that a sense of the sacredness of the Union and of the greatness of its blessings, is but faintly apprehended, even by that party which boasts of unfaltering adherence to it.

In closing this article, we are aware that we have said much, in which many of our fellow-citizens will not concur. Men of all parties will probably dissent from some of our positions. But has not the time come, when the vassalage of party may be thrown off? when we may speak of the past and present, without asking whether our opinion will be echoed by this or that class of politicians? when we may cease to condemn and justify in the mass? when a more liberal and elevated style of discussion may be introduced? when we may open our eyes on the faults of our friends, and may look at subjects which involve our country's welfare, in the broad, clear light of day? This style of discussion we are anxious to promote; and we feel, that whoever may encourage and diffuse it, will deserve a place among the most faithful friends of freedom.

# REMARKS

ON

# EDUCATION.

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AMERICAN ANNALS OF EDUCATION AND INSTRUCTION. Edited by William C. Woodbridge. Boston. 8vo.

THE work, of which we have placed the title at the head of this article, is devoted to what is generally acknowledged to be the most important interest of families and of the State. It has, therefore, no ordinary claims to patronage, especially as it is the only work of the kind published in the country. We learn, however, that the support now given it, not only falls short of its just claims, but is so insufficient, that, unless its circulation can be extended, it must be abandoned. We are not only grieved at this, but somewhat disappointed; for, although we knew the ruling passion in the community for light and amusing reading, we did hope, that the acknowledged importance of education, and the necessity laid on every parent to watch over and guide the young, would overcome the repugnance to mental labor, and would communicate an interest to details, which, separate from their end, would be dry and repulsive. It seems, however, that the community are more dis-

posed to talk of education in general than to enter patiently and minutely into its principles and methods, more disposed to laud it than to labor for it; and on this account we feel ourselves bound to say something, however briefly and rapidly, of the obligation of regarding it as the paramount object of society, and of giving encouragement to those, who make it their task or who devote themselves to its promotion. We know that we are repeating a thrice-told tale, are inviting attention to principles which the multitude most courteously acknowledge, and as readily forget. But all great truths are apt to grow trite; and if the moral teacher should fail to enforce them, because they are worn by repetition, religious and moral teaching would well nigh cease.

One excellence of the periodical work before us is, that it is pledged to no particular system of education, but starts with the acknowledgment of the great defects of all systems, and with the disposition to receive new lights, come from what quarter they may. It is no partisan. It is the instrument of no sect. It is designed to improve our modes of training the young; to give more generous views of the objects of education and of the discipline by which they may be attained; to increase the efficiency of existing institutions, and to aid in forming new ones more suited to our age and country; to unfold and diffuse those great, universal principles in which men of all parties may be expected to agree, and to point out the applications of them in our families and schools. Its pages are open to original suggestions, to discoveries, to the zealous reformer, and even to the too sanguine innovator. Its aim is, to be a medium of communication for all who think on the subject of education, to furnish new facts to the phi-

losopher, and to make known the results of successful experiments. Its liberality gives it one strong claim to support.

Perhaps, if it were more confined in its views, if it were designed to answer the purposes of a party or sect, it would be better sustained. Were it to proscribe one class, and to pander to the bad passions of another, it would not perhaps be obliged to sue for more generous patronage. But is it true, that a work on education cannot find readers without assuming the badge of party? Cannot the greatness of its object secure attention to its teachings? In what class of society ought it not to find friends? What parent has not a deep interest in the improvement of public and private education? What philanthropist does not see in this the chief preparation of a people for his schemes of usefulness? What patriot does not see in this the main security of free institutions? This cause is commended alike to our private and public affections; and must the only periodical devoted to it die through neglect?

We are aware, that there are some, who take an attitude of defence, when pressed with earnest applications on the subject of education. They think its importance overrated. They say, that circumstances chiefly determine the young mind, that the influence of parents and teachers is very narrow, and that they sometimes dwarf and distort, instead of improving the child, by taking the work out of the hand of nature. These remarks are not wholly unfounded. The power of parents is often exaggerated. To strengthen their sense of responsibility, they are often taught, that they are competent to effects, which are not within their reach, and are often discouraged by the greatness of the

task to which they are summoned. Nothing is gained by exaggeration. It is true, and the truth need not be disguised, that parents cannot operate at pleasure on the minds and characters of the young. Their influence is limited by their own ignorance and imperfection, by the strength and freedom of the will of the child, and by its connexion, from its breath, with other objects and beings. Parents are not the only educators of their offspring, but must divide the work with other and numerous agents; and in this we rejoice; for, were the young confined to domestic influences, each generation would be a copy of the preceding, and the progress of society would cease. The child is not put into the hands of parents alone. It is not born to hear but a few voices. It is brought at birth into a vast, we may say, an infinite school. The universe is charged with the office of its education. Innumerable voices come to it from all that it meets, sees, feels. It is not confined to a few books anxiously selected for it by parental care. Nature, society, experience, are volumes opened everywhere and perpetually before its eyes. It takes lessons from every object within the sphere of its senses and its activity, from the sun and stars, from the flowers of spring and the fruits of autumn, from every associate, from every smiling and frowning countenance, from the pursuits, trades, professions of the community in which it moves, from its plays, friendships, and dislikes, from the varieties of human character, and from the consequences of its actions. All these, and more than these, are appointed to teach, awaken, develope the mind of the child. It is plunged amidst friendly and hostile influences, to grow by coöperating with the first, and by resisting the last. The circumstances in which

we are placed, form, indeed, a most important school, and by their help some men have risen to distinction in knowledge and virtue, with little aid from parents, teachers, and books.

Still the influence of parents and teachers is great. On them it very much depends, whether the circumstances which surround the child shall operate to his good. They must help him to read, interpret, and use wisely the great volumes of nature, society, and experience. They must fix his volatile glance, arrest his precipitate judgment, guide his observation, teach him to link together cause and effect in the outward world, and turn his thoughts inward on his own more mysterious nature. The young, left to the education of circumstances, left without teaching, guidance, restraint, will, in all probability, grow up ignorant, torpid in intellect, strangers to their own powers, and slaves to their passions. The fact, that some children, without aid from parents or schools, have struggled into eminence, no more proves such aid to be useless, than the fact, that some have grown strong under physical exposures which would destroy the majority of the race, would prove the worthlessness of the ordinary precautions which are taken for the security of health.

We have spoken of parents, as possessing, and as bound to exert, an important influence on the young. But they cannot do the whole work of education. Their daily occupation, the necessity of labors for the support of their families, household cares, the duty of watching over the health of their children, and other social relations, render it almost impossible for parents to qualify themselves for much of the teaching which the young require, and often deny them time and opportunity for

giving instruction to which they are competent. Hence the need of a class of persons, who shall devote themselves exclusively to the work of education. In all societies, ancient and modern, this want has been felt; the profession of teachers has been known; and to secure the best helps of this kind to children, is one of the first duties of parents, for on these the progress of their children very much depends.

One of the discouraging views of society at the present moment is, that, whilst much is said of education, hardly any seem to feel the necessity of securing to it the best minds in the community, and of securing them at any price. A juster estimate of this office begins to be made in our great cities; but, generally, it seems to be thought that anybody may become a teacher. The most moderate ability is thought to be competent to the most important profession in society. Strange, too, as it may seem, on this point parents incline to be economical. They who squander thousands on dress, furniture, amusements, think it hard to pay comparatively small sums to the instructer; and through this ruinous economy, and this ignorance of the dignity of a teacher's vocation, they rob their children of aid, for which the treasures of worlds can afford no compensation.

There is no office higher than that of a teacher of youth, for there is nothing on earth so precious as the mind, soul, character of the child. No office should be regarded with greater respect. The first minds in the community should be encouraged to assume it. Parents should do all but impoverish themselves, to induce such to become the guardians and guides of their children. To this good, all their show and luxury should be sacrificed. Here they should be lavish, whilst they straiten

themselves in every thing else. They should wear the cheapest clothes, live on the plainest food, if they can in no other way secure to their families the best instruction. They should have no anxiety to accumuate property for their children, provided they can place them under influences, which will awaken their faculties, inspire them with pure and high principles, and fit them to bear a manly, useful, and honorable part in the world. No language can express the cruelty or folly of that economy, which, to leave a fortune to a child, starves his intellect, impoverishes his heart. There should be no economy in education. Money should never be weighed against the soul of a child. It should be poured out like water, for the child's intellectual and moral life.

Parents should seek an educator for the young of their families, who will become to them a hearty and efficient friend, counsellor, coadjutor, in their work. If their circumstances will allow it, they should so limit the school, that the instructer may know intimately every child, may become the friend of each, and may converse frequently with them in regard to each. He should be worthy of their confidence, should find their doors always open, should be among their most welcome guests, and should study with them the discipline which the peculiarities of each pupil may require. He should give the parents warning of the least obliquity of mind which he discovers at school, should receive in return their suggestions as to the injudiciousness of his own methods in regard to one or another child, and should concert with them the means of arresting every evil at its first manifestation. Such is the teacher we need, and his value cannot be paid in gold. A man of distinguished ability and virtue, whose mind should

be concentrated in the work of training as many children as he can thoroughly understand and guide, would shed a light on the path of parents for which they often sigh, and would give an impulse to the young, little comprehended under our present modes of teaching. No profession should receive so liberal remuneration. We need not say how far the community fall short of this estimate of the teacher's office. Very many send their children to school, and seldom or never see the instructer, who is operating daily and deeply on their minds and characters. With a blind confidence, perhaps they do not ask how that work is advancing, on which the dearest interests of the family depend. Perhaps they put the children under the daily control of one, with whom they do not care to associate. Perhaps, were they told what they ought to pay for teaching, they would stare as if a project for robbing them were on foot, or would suspect the sanity of the friend, who should counsel them to throw away so much money in purchasing that cheapest of all articles, that drug in every market, instruction for their children.

We know not how society can be aided more than by the formation of a body of wise and efficient educators. We know not any class which would contribute so much to the stability of the state, and to domestic happiness. Much as we respect the ministry of the Gospel, we believe that it must yield in importance to the office of training the young. In truth, the ministry now accomplishes little for want of that early intellectual and moral discipline, by which alone a community can be prepared to distinguish truth from falsehood, to comprehend the instructions of the pulpit, to receive higher and broader views of duty, and to apply general

principles to the diversified details of life. A body of cultivated men, devoted, with their whole hearts, to the improvement of education, and to the most effectual training of the young, would work a fundamental revolution in society. They would leaven the community with just principles. Their influence would penetrate our families. Our domestic discipline would no longer be left to accident and impulse. What parent has not felt the need of this aid, has not often been depressed, heart-sick, under the consciousness of ignorance in the great work of swaying the youthful mind!

We have spoken of the office of the education of human beings, as the noblest on earth, and have spoken deliberately. It is more important than that of the statesman. The statesman may set fences round our property and dwellings; but how much more are we indebted to him, who calls forth the powers and affections of those for whom our property is earned, and our dwellings are reared, and who renders our children objects of increasing love and respect. We go further. We maintain, that higher ability is required for the office of an educator of the young, than for that of a statesman. The highest ability is that, which penetrates farthest into human nature, comprehends the mind in all its capacities, traces out the laws of thought and moral action, understands the perfection of human nature and how it may be approached, understands the springs, motives, applications, by which the child is to be roused to the most vigorous and harmonious action of all its faculties, understands its perils, and knows how to blend and modify the influences which outward circumstances exert on the youthful mind. The speculations of statesmen are shallow, compared with these. It is the chief

function of the statesman to watch over the outward interests of a people; that of the educator to quicken its soul. The statesman must study and manage the passions and prejudices of the community; the educator must study the essential, the deepest, the loftiest principles of human nature. The statesman works with coarse instruments for coarse ends; the educator is to work by the most refined influences on that delicate, ethereal essence, the immortal soul.

Nothing is more common than mistakes as to the comparative importance of the different vocations of life. Noisy, showy agency, which is spread over a great surface, and therefore seldom penetrates beneath the surface, is called glory. Multitudes are blinded by official dignity, and stand wondering at a pigmy, because he happens to be perched on some eminence in church or state. So the declaimer, who can electrify a crowd by passionate appeals, or splendid images, which give no clear perceptions to the intellect, which develope no general truth, which breathe no firm, disinterested purpose, passes for a great man. How few reflect, that the greater man is he, who, without noise or show, is wisely fixing in a few minds broad, pregnant, generous principles of judgment and action, and giving an impulse which will carry them on for ever. Jesus, with that divine wisdom which separates him from all other teachers, declared, that the first requisite for becoming "great in his kingdom," which was another phrase for exerting a great moral influence, was Humility; by which he meant a spirit opposed to that passion for conspicuous station with which he saw his disciples inflamed, a spirit of deep, unpretending philanthropy, manifested in sympathy with the wants of the mind,

and in condescension to any efforts by which the ignorant and tempted might be brought to truth and virtue. According to these views, we think it a greater work to educate a child, in the true and large sense of that phrase, than to rule a state.

Perhaps the direction which benevolence is taking at the present day, has some influence in turning from the office of education the high honor which is its due. Benevolence is now directing itself very much to public objects, to the alleviation of misery on a grand scale, to the conversion of whole nations, to the instruction of large bodies, and in this form it draws the chief notice and admiration of multitudes. Now we are far from wishing to confine this action of charity. We respect it, and recognise in it one of the distinctive fruits of Christianity. But it must not be forgotten, that the purest benevolence is that which acts on Individuals, and is manifested in our particular, social, domestic relations. It requires no great improvement in charity, to sympathize with the degradation and misery, into which the millions of India are sunk by the worship of Juggernaut, and other superstitions. It is a higher action of the intellect and heart, to study and understand thoroughly the character of an individual who is near us, to enter into his mind, to trace his defects and sufferings to their true springs, to bear quietly and gently with his frowardness and relapses, and to apply to him patiently and encouragingly the means of intellectual and moral elevation. It is not the highest attainment to be benevolent, to those who are thousands of miles from us, whose miseries make striking pictures for the imagination, who never cross our paths, never interfere with our interests, never try us by their waywardness, never

shock us by their coarse manners, and whom we are to assist by an act of bounty, which sends a missionary to their aid. The truest mode of enlarging our benevolence, is not to quicken our sensibility towards great masses, or wide-spread evils, but to approach, comprehend, sympathize with, and act upon, a continually increasing number of individuals. It is the glory of God to know, love, and act on, every individual in his infinite creation. Let us, if we can, do good far and wide. Let us send light and joy, if we can, to the ends of the earth. The charity, which is now active for distant objects, is noble. We only wish to say, that it ranks behind the obscurer philanthropy, which, while it sympathizes with the race, enters deeply into the minds, wants, interests of the individuals within its reach, and devotes itself patiently and wisely to the task of bringing them to a higher standard of intellectual and moral worth.

We would suggest it to those who are anxious to do good on a grand and imposing scale, that *they* should be the last to cast into the shade the labors of the retired teacher of the young; because education is the germ of all other improvements, and because all their schemes for the progress of society must fail without it. How often have the efforts of the philanthropist been foiled, by the prejudices and brutal ignorance of the community which he has hoped to serve, by their incapacity of understanding him, of entering into and coöperating with his views! He has cast his seed on the barren sand, and of course reaped no fruit but disappointment. Philanthropists are too apt to imagine, that they can accomplish particular reformations, or work particular changes in a society, although no foundation for these improve-

ments has been laid in its intellectual and moral culture. They expect a people to think and act wisely in special cases, although generally wanting in intelligence, sound judgment, and the capacity of understanding and applying the principles of reason. But this partial improvement is a vain hope. The physician, who should spend his skill on a diseased limb, whilst all the functions were deranged, and the principle of life almost extinguished, would get no credit for skill. To do men permanent good, we must act on their whole nature, and especially must aid, foster, and guide their highest faculties, at the first period of their developement. If left in early life to sink into intellectual and moral torpor, if suffered to grow up unconscious of their powers, unused to steady and wise exertion of the understanding, and strangers to the motives which ought to stir and guide human activity, they will be poor subjects for the efforts of the philanthropist. Benevolence is short-sighted, indeed, and must blame itself for failure, if it do not see in education the chief interest of the human race.

One great cause of the low estimation, in which the teacher is now held, may be found in narrow views of education. The multitude think, that to educate a child is to crowd into its mind a given amount of knowledge, to teach the mechanism of reading and writing, to load the memory with words, to prepare a boy for the routine of a trade. No wonder, then, that they think almost everybody fit to teach. The true end of education, as we have again and again suggested, is to unfold and direct aright our whole nature. Its office is to call forth power of every kind, power of thought, affection, will, and outward action; power to observe, to reason, to judge, to contrive; power to adopt good ends firmly,

and to pursue them efficiently ; power to govern our selves, and to influence others ; power to gain and to spread happiness. Reading is but an instrument ; education is to teach its best use. The intellect was created, not to receive passively a few words, dates, facts, but to be active for the acquisition of Truth. Accordingly, education should labor to inspire a profound love of truth, and to teach the processes of investigation. A sound logic, by which we mean the science or art, which instructs us in the laws of reasoning and evidence, in the true methods of inquiry, and in the sources of false judgments, is an essential part of a good education. And yet how little is done to teach the right use of the intellect, in the common modes of training either rich or poor ! As a general rule, the young are to be made, as far as possible, their own teachers, the discoverers of truth, the interpreters of nature, the framers of science. They are to be helped to help themselves. They should be taught to observe and study the world in which they live, to trace the connexions of events, to rise from particular facts to general principles, and then to apply these in explaining new phenomena. Such is a rapid outline of the intellectual education, which, as far as possible, should be given to all human beings ; and with this, moral education should go hand in hand. In proportion as the child gains knowledge, he should be taught how to use it well, how to turn it to the good of mankind. He should study the world as God's world, and as the sphere in which he is to form interesting connexions with his fellow-creatures. A spirit of humanity should be breathed into him from all his studies. In teaching geography, the physical and moral condition, the wants, advantages, and striking peculiarities of different nations,

and the relations of climates, seas, rivers, mountains, to their characters and pursuits, should be pointed out, so as to awaken an interest in man, wherever he dwells. History should be constantly used to exercise the moral judgment of the young, to call forth sympathy with the fortunes of the human race, and to expose to indignation and abhorrence, that selfish ambition, that passion for dominion, which has so long deluged the earth with blood and woe. And not only should the excitement of just moral feeling be proposed in every study. The science of morals should form an important part of every child's instruction. One branch of ethics should be particularly insisted on by the government. Every school, established by law, should be specially bound to teach the duties of the citizen to the state, to unfold the principles of free institutions, and to train the young to an enlightened patriotism. From these brief and imperfect views of the nature and ends of a wise education, we learn the dignity of the profession to which it is intrusted, and the importance of securing to it the best minds of the community.

On reviewing these hints on the extent of education, we see that one important topic has been omitted. We have said, that it is the office of the teacher to call into vigorous action the mind of the child. He must do more. He must strive to create a thirst, an insatiable craving for knowledge, to give animation to study and make it a pleasure, and thus to communicate an impulse which will endure, when the instructions of the school are closed. The mark of a good teacher is, not only that he produces great effort in his pupils, but that he dismisses them from his care, conscious of having only laid the foundation of knowledge, and anxious and re-

solved to improve themselves. One of the sure signs of the low state of instruction among us is, that the young, on leaving school, feel as if the work of intellectual culture were done, and give up steady, vigorous effort for higher truth and wider knowledge. Our daughters at sixteen and our sons at eighteen or twenty have *finished* their education. The true use of a school is, to enable and dispose the pupil to learn through life; and if so, who does not see that the office of teacher requires men of enlarged and liberal minds, and of winning manners, in other words, that it requires as cultivated men as can be found in society. If to drive and to drill were the chief duties of an instructer, if to force into the mind an amount of lifeless knowledge, to make the child a machine, to create a repugnance to books, to mental labor, to the acquisition of knowledge, were the great objects of the school-room, then the teacher might be chosen on the principles which now govern the school-committees in no small part of our country. Then the man who can read, write, cipher, and whip, and will exercise his gifts at the lowest price, deserves the precedence which he now too often enjoys. But if the human being be something more than a block or a brute, if he have powers which proclaim him a child of God, and which were given for noble action and perpetual progress, then a better order of things should begin among us, and truly enlightened men should be summoned to the work of education.

Leaving the subject of instruction, we observe, that there is another duty of teachers, which requires that they should be taken from the class of improved, wise, virtuous men. They are to govern as well as teach. They must preserve order, and for this end must inflict

punishment in some of its forms. We know that some philanthropists wish to banish all punishment from the school. We would not discourage their efforts and hopes; but we fear, that the time for this reform is not yet come, and that as long as the want of a wise discipline at home supplies the teacher with so many lawless subjects, he will be compelled to use other restraints than kindness and reason. Punishment, we fear, cannot be dispensed with; but that it ought to be administered most deliberately, righteously, judiciously, and with a wise adaptation to the character of the child, we all feel; and can it then be safely intrusted, as is too much the case, to teachers undisciplined in mind and heart? Corporal punishment at present has a place in almost all our schools for boys, and perhaps in some for girls. It may be necessary. But ought not every parent to have some security, that his child shall not receive a blow, unless inflicted in wisdom, justice, and kindness? And what security can he have for this, but in the improved character of the instructer? We have known mournful effects of injudicious corporal punishment. We have known a blow to alienate a child from his father, to stir up bitter hatred towards his teacher, and to indispose him to study and the pursuit of knowledge. We cannot be too unwilling to place our children under the care of passionate teachers, who, having no rule over their own spirits, cannot of course rule others, or of weak and unskilful teachers, who are obliged to supply by severity the want of a wise firmness. It is wonderful how thoughtlessly parents expose their children to corporal punishment. Our laws have expunged whipping from the penal code, and the felon is exempted from this in dignity. But how many boys are subjected to a whip-

per in the shape of a schoolmaster, whose whole mystery of discipline lies in the ferule. The discipline of a school is of vast importance in its moral influence. A boy compelled for six hours each day to see the countenance and hear the voice of an unfeeling, petulant, passionate, unjust teacher, is placed in a school of vice. He is all the time learning lessons of inhumanity, hardheartedness, and injustice. The English are considered by the rest of Europe as inclined to cruelty. Their common people are said to be wanting in mercy to the inferior animals and to be ferocious in their quarrels, and their planters enjoy the bad preëminence of being the worst masters in the West Indies, with the exception of the Dutch. It is worth consideration, whether these vices, if they really exist, may not be ascribed in part to the unrestrained, barbarous usé of whipping in their schools. Of one thing we are sure, that the discipline of a school has an important influence on the character of a child, and that a just, mild, benevolent teacher, who procures order by methods which the moral sense of his pupils approves, is perpetually spreading around him his own virtues. Should not our teachers then be sought from the class of the most enlightened and excellent men ?

Our limits allow us to add but one more remark on the qualifications of teachers. It is important, that they should be able to coöperate with parents in awakening the religious principle in the young. We would not of course admit into schools the peculiarities of the denominations which divide the Christian world. But religion in its broadest sense should be taught. It should indirectly mix with all teaching. The young mind should be guided through nature and human history to

the Creator and Disposer of the Universe ; and still more, the practical principles and spirit of Christianity should be matters of direct inculcation. We know no office requiring greater wisdom, and none but the wise and good should be invited to discharge it.

We know that it will be objected to the views now given, that few, very few, will be able to pay for such teachers as we recommend. We believe, however, that there is a large class, who, if they had the will, and would deny themselves as they ought, might procure excellent instructers for their children ; and as for the rest, let them do their best, let them but throw their hearts into this cause, and improvements will be effected, which have not been anticipated, perhaps not conceived. We acknowledge, however, that our remarks have been intended chiefly for the opulent. Let an interest in education be awakened in this class, and let more generous means for its promotion be employed, and we are satisfied that the teaching of all classes will be advanced, the talent of the country will be more and more directed to the office of instruction, and the benefit will spread through the whole community.

END OF VOL. I.

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